Capital Hill Ballfield renovation close to completion. PAGE 2
Sanitary inspections of food establishments for June 2024. PAGE 6

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 134

www.saipantribune.com | FRIDAY JULY 5, 2024 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

Hundreds endure scorching heat to attend 78th Liberation Day Parade

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
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CORRESPONDENT

The local community came out in droves, lined up along Beach Road, and braved the scorching mid-day sun to watch a total of 55 floats and marchers in yesterday's 78th Liberation Day Parade with this year's theme "Honoring Memories from the past with Moments of Today."

Unlike previous Liberation Day parades, yesterday's was bereft of the clouds and cooler weather with the occasional rain showers Saipan has grown accustomed to during their usual 4th of July celebrations. At least, people's umbrellas were still utilized—this time as a shield from the debilitating rays of the sun.

RACQUEL FLOYD

All is well as the Department of Corrections joined the 78th Liberation Day Parade as a non-competing float yesterday.

RACQUEL FLOYD

The Carabao Cart, an entry in the non-profit competing float category, made the crowd laugh when one of its riders said, "Carabao doesn't need gas, he eats grass and we smoke grass" during yesterday's 78th Liberation Day Parade. **See more photos on Page 12**

The float caravan included part that in a way symbolized an olive branch extended by the Department of Corrections, in a non-competing DOC Commissioner Anthony Torres to the organizers of the Liberation Day Parade.

On Wednesday, Torres went on social media to express his displeasure that DOC's late entry to the $5,000 float competition was nixed by organizers. His outcry compelled

See HUNDREDS on Page 4

CNMI budget remains unchanged

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Despite having thought that the CNMI's budget for fiscal year 2025 would reflect a reduction following the closures of Hyatt Regency Saipan and Asiana Airlines, the Department of Finance and the Office of the Governor has submitted a revised budget that did not reflect a reduction.

Last July 1, the Office of the Governor submitted a revised FY25 budget to the Legislature, however, the CNMI's revised budget of

See BUDGET on Page 4

Committee of creditors oppose complete liquidation of IPI

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The committee of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) creditors have filed a motion opposing the CNMI government's request to convert IPI's Chapter 11 Bankruptcy to a Chapter 7 Bankruptcy (essentially a complete dissolution of assets) stating a conversion does not benefit creditors.

Aram Ordubegian, attorney for the committee of IPI creditors, has filed an opposition to the CNMI government's motion seeking to convert IPI's current Chapter 11 Bankruptcy to a Chapter 7 Bankruptcy.

While a Chapter 11 Bankruptcy allows a petitioner to reorganize and restructure, a Chapter 7 Bankruptcy calls for complete liquidation of assets which could lead to a dissolution.

See CREDITORS on Page 4

GOP misses the mark

By ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Arnold I. Palacios is the governor of the CNMI

It's rather disingenuous for GOP president Diego Benavente to be lecturing about tourism, as he did in a press release this week—especially when the biggest exodus of Japanese hotels, airlines, and other investments happened on his watch, when he was lieutenant

See GOP on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Threads Guam opened its very first outlet outside of the U.S. territory after setting shop around 132 miles north on Saipan at the Town House Shopping Center in Chalan Kanoa.
PAGE 13

WORLD
An Israeli strike in southern Lebanon on Wednesday killed a senior Hezbollah commander as tensions between the two sides continue to boil, a Hezbollah official told The Associated Press.
PAGE 13

LIFE & STYLE
The best of Black culture's policymakers, thought leaders, creatives, spiritual gurus, business movers and shakers, health experts and, of course, musical talent are poised to converge in New Orleans over the Fourth of July weekend as part of the Essence Festival of Culture.
PAGE 14

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GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Capital Hill Ballfield renovation close to completion

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

The Division of Parks and Recreation, which is under the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, is nearing completion of the renovation at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

On Wednesday, Division of Parks and Recreation director Michael Cruz spoke with *Saipan Tribune* a little bit more about the project.

Cruz shared that the facelift began a month ago, with the main goal to replace the deteriorating fencing around the field.

He said that the old fence had served nearly two decades already and that due to the corrosion on the fence and several gaping holes, it needed to be completely replaced. He said Parks & Rec was grateful that they were able to receive funding to do just that.

He shared his gratitude for Rep. Joel Camacho (Ind-Saipan) and the administration of Gov. Arnold I. Palacios for

See CAPITAL on Page 3

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CAPITAL

From page 2

supporting the endeavor, especially helping them get the funding to do the renovation.

Cruz shared that $40,000 was allocated for the field's renovation and that the Department of Public Works was spearheading the whole renovation, including getting contractors. He said as for the basketball court on the premises, Atkins Kroll had sponsored to fix it up. He also shared that Parks & Rec is also working with a group using the adjacent tennis court as they shared plans to fix it up as well.

As for the field, he shared that they have received offers from certain agencies to paint the dugouts, but it was still not confirmed yet. He said their main renovation should be completed on July 15, 2024.

"It's playable but we just have to make sure we give the contractors a chance to finish the project. We can use it for now because there is a T-ball tourney going on now and they want to use the field, but we have to make sure that it's safety first, and remove all the materials and equipment before they can utilize the field."

Cruz said he can't wait for the Capital Hill Ballfield to be fully playable again.

"That's why I got our stuff here. We're cutting the grass and trying to get it ready so when it's done, we can immediately start utilizing it. This place is not only for the youth in our community, but there are also softball tournaments for medical fundraisers done here as well as high school and village tournaments. So really, this field is essential for folks on the island."

CHRYSTAL MARINO
The Capital Hill Ballfield on Capital Hill undergoing renovation.

CHRYSTAL MARINO
The Department of Lands and Natural Resources' Division of Parks and Recreation loads up equipment after cutting grass at the Capital Hill Ballfield last Wednesday afternoon.

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BUDGET

From page 1

over $158,614,274 reflected no reduction rather reappropriations.

"In accordance with Article III, Section 9 of the NMI Constitution and 1 CMC § 7201(e), I submit the proposed budget revision for the Commonwealth Government and Related Agencies for Fiscal Year 2025 beginning Oct. 1, 2024, and ending Sept. 20, 2025. As mandated by the CNMI Constitution, the budget submitted herein is balanced such that the total amount of proposed expenditures does not exceed the total estimated resources available for appropriations. The gross budgetary resources reported by the Secretary of Finance and available for general appropriation for Fiscal Year 2025 remain unchanged at $158,614,274. The gross amount is adjusted to reflect earmarked funds, debt service, and other legally obligated set-asides, resulting in available resources for appropriation of $111,474,011," Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said in a letter to House Speaker Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) and Senate President Edith DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan)

Although the budget currently remains unchanged, Department of Finance Secretary Tracy Norita told *Saipan Tribune* adjustments can be made well into the fiscal year based on revenue collections.

"The FY25 [budget] is already reduced from the current year. We base our projections on actual collections and can always be adjusted during the budget year. That way we follow the actual impact to revenues," she said.

In his letter addressed to the Legislature, Palacios further stated that positive economic developments are underway in the CNMI, including escalated construction work from military activities on Tinian, multiple government projects to improve primary and secondary roadways, and several other capital improvement projects that will continue or be completed in 2025.

"Northern Marianas College, for example, anticipates the completion of its $33-million Student Center in FY2025, and expects to begin the construction of two other new buildings in 2025. There are other projects throughout the Commonwealth: in addition to Route 206 (Tinian), which was recently completed, we anticipate other major project completions in FY 2025 to include the Garapan Revitalization Project, Beach Road Improvement Project, and Route 36 Kalabera Road. The Lieutenant Governor and I are working with cabinet members to expedite other projects that are pending and will contribute to the economic resources of the Commonwealth," he said.

Palacios also stated that the Department of Finance, Division of Revenue & Tax, and Customs and Biosecurity are actively monitoring construction shipments and taxable activities to boost revenue collections.

"DRT's Collection Branch recently provided outreach services in partnership with the University of Baltimore School of Law Taxpayer Clinic and Azarvand Tax Law to assist taxpayers in the collection process, reviewing over 90 tax cases amounting to $4.85 million in tax receivables. As demonstrated in the collection of $14.6 million in the past year by the Tax Collection Taskforce, this administration remains committed to strong tax enforcement and compliance to ensure steady revenue collections," he said.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CREDITORS

From page 1

"The Commonwealth's motion seeks conversion to Chapter 7. The Office of the United States Trustee recognizes conversion does not benefit creditors and is therefore not appropriate but cites its concern over the debtor's failure to maintain insurance and suggests dismissal of the case as punishment for that failure. Neither conversion nor dismissal is appropriate here," said Ordubegian.

The committee instead is requesting that the NMI Bankruptcy Court deny the Commonwealth's motion, and as an alternative, appoint a Chapter 11 trustee if the debtor does not satisfy the sale milestones by the Aug. 14 hearing date.

According to the 16-page motion, Ordubegian argues that conversion virtually assures a fire sale of the debtor's only asset, leaving creditors empty-handed, and dismissal would punish the creditors and benefit the debtor.

"Instead, the motion should be denied, and the debtor should remain in Chapter 11, closely supervised by the committee. As previewed at the final debtor-in possession financing hearing on June 27, 2024, after numerous rounds of negotiation, the debtor has agreed, subject to written confirmation, to undertake a comprehensive court-supervised marketing process. Before any sale can occur, creditors of this estate must have the assurance that the debtor's assets and business have been thoroughly marketed and valued by an investment banker, so as to maximize recovery to general unsecured creditors, rather than being sold to insiders at a low-ball price," said Ordubegian.

To ensure IPI honors its commitment, Ordubegian said the committee will have consultation and approval rights at every step of the entire marketing and sale process, including selecting and retaining an investment banker, establishing bidding procedures, reviewing and selecting bids, and closing a sale.

"The debtor and the committee have begun the process of interviewing investment bankers with proven track records in selling distressed hotel and casino assets and the wherewithal to reach regional and international hotel investors and developers. Since then, the debtor and the committee have been conferring on the various proposals, comparing the compensation terms, and reviewing marketing plans. Before the hearing on the motion, the debtor, with the committee's approval, will seek to retain an investment banker with the requisite experience and qualifications to run a robust marketing process," he said.

Ordubegian notes that the committee's representatives have been led by IPI's counsel to believe that the casino investor is buying into the proposed marketing and sale process, but there have been no written commitments to date from IPI regarding this process.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

HUNDREDS

From page 1

Saipan Mayor Ramon B. "R.B." Camacho to reiterate that rules are rules, while emphasizing his office's gratitude for all the help DOC extended in constructing the Liberation Day Parade grandstand at the Garapan Fishing Base.

"I really appreciate you know, the Department of Corrections for participating. I thank him (Torres) so much," Mayor Camacho later said.

A couple of hours earlier, the 78th Liberation Day Parade began in earnest along Saipan's newly paved main thoroughfare with a KC-135 Tanker, a refueling aircraft of the U.S. Air Force, flyby at exactly 10am signaling the start.

A motorcade from the Young Gunz opened the parade, with marchers and floats starting at the National Office Supply and reaching the grand stand at 10:28am.

It was followed by the marching of the Department of Public Safety colors, the vehicles of Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and first lady Maria "Wella" Palacios, and the Office of the Governor's entourage, followed by the vehicles of Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang and Superior Cour Presiding Judge Robert Naraja.

Saipan Mayor Ramon B. "RB" Camacho, Rota Mayor Aubry Hocog, Tinian Mayor Edwin Aldan, Northern Islands Mayor Velentino N. Taisacan—a group that deem themselves Unified Mayors—and former Mayor Jose "Pitu" Sablan came nexy and all rode golf carts as their vehicles of choice in the parade.

Pedro JL Igitol, grand marshal in a red Mustang convertible, followed after the golf carts. He was followed by the beauty queens—Liberation Queen from 2019 to 23—Pernalynn Janet Borja Camacho, Miss Marianas Savannah Delos Santos, Miss Earth Jan Zowie, and newly crowned 2024 Liberation Queen Xeayda Manglona with the princess and first runner-up on the Royal Court's float.

The 2024 Liberation Day chair and vice chair Delbert Pua and Edmond Borja came after the beauty queens on their vehicles.

A group of military officials made up of Guam Army National Guards, United States Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, United States Marine Corps, sailors from the USCGC *Oliver Henry* and USS *Rafael Peralta*, CNMI PSS JROTC, Western Maritime, and CNMI Medical Reserve Corps Unit came up next.

"Today a lot of military marching. You know, different branches of the military, and a lot of people... there's a lot of participation in the parade," said Mayor Camacho.

Other groups and organizations that marched and rode vehicles during the parade were the Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ, Saipan Awaodori Team, Japanese Society of NMI, Lions Clubs International District 2024 Region 2, United Filipino Organization, CNMI Martial Arts Academy, Korean Association, Tamoni Ministries Inc., Victory Chapel, Chinese Association of Saipan, Bangladesh Cultural Group, Car Clubs: Elusive, Down2Ride, Stance Garage, Low District, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter, American Memorial Park, Saipan Falun Dafa Association, Saipan Fishermen's Association, Herman's Modern Bakery, The Fraternal Order of Eagles (Philippine Eagles) Marianas Eagles, and Marianas Lady Eagles Club.

The competing floats (nonprofit) were The Fraternal Order of Eagles (Philippine Eagles) Saipan Magalahi, Eagles Club, Carabao Cart, Highlands Lawn Care, Petlas Marianas and Cab Dancers. Government floats that competed were Office of Aging and the Rota Mayor's Office. Nippon Dommanaka Matsuri (PDI) also joined the parade as a non-competing float.

The parade ended at 12:45pm with the announcement of the float winners and a grand fireworks display scheduled during the concluding event of the month-long 78th Liberation Day festivities last night.

Saipan's Liberation Day commemorates the permanent closure of civilian internment camps at the end of World War II on July 4, 1946.

GOP

From page 1

governor (2002-2006).

Let me remind Mr. Benavente that nearly every hotel in the CNMI has changed hands at least once. As the former lieutenant governor surely remembers, when Japan Airlines pulled out of the CNMI during his administration, Nikko Hotel and La Fiesta Mall went with them. Nikko became Palms, and years later, Palms became Kensington, now owned by E-land.

There are many other examples of hotels changing hands in the CNMI, including Coral Ocean Point from Suwaso to E-land; Pacific Islands Club from Ken Corp. to E-Land; Hafa Adai Hotel to Grandvrio; Intercontinental Hotel to Dai Ichi to Fiesta to Crowne Plaza; Laolao Bay Golf and Resort has also changed ownership.

Hyatt Regency Saipan was also previously owned and sold by Continental Airlines, and current owner Saipan Portopia Corp will either assign its lease to another investor very soon or the Department of Public Lands will put the property out for bid. When the hotel reopens with a new owner and management, there will be new jobs to fill, because nearly all of Hyatt's former employees were quickly picked up by other establishments.

Lots of hotels change hands. That is the nature of the business, and it's not the end of the world when it happens.

As for the CNMI Republican Party's position that "CNMI needs tourists from China" and "we do not have the luxury of selecting other markets for travelers to the CNMI"—I suggest they take a look at the national Republican Party position on China and the letter that 32 Republican members of Congress recently wrote urging the Biden administration to apply B1/B2 visa requirements for Chinese nationals entering the CNMI.

"It is imperative we deter Chinese Communist Party aggression, espionage, and transnational repression," these U.S. Republican lawmakers wrote.

Perhaps the CNMI Republicans missed the memo—or chose to ignore it.

CNMI Republicans may have also missed the headlines for the past 30 years, or perhaps it's political amnesia that prompts them to describe the garment and gaming industries as "industries that supported our economy"—the two industries that tainted the CNMI's reputation more than any other, and associated our islands with human trafficking, labor exploitation, and immigration violations.

Let me also remind Mr. Benavente that the CNMI lost critical tools for economic development and triggered federal intervention because of rampant abuses in the garment and gaming industries. If the CNMI Republican Party wants to take credit for that—have at it. But I won't hold my breath for any actual solutions from the same people who have done so much damage to both our government and economy over the years with bad policies and the plundering of public funds.

To the people of the Commonwealth: Yes, we are facing difficult times; there is no question about that. Our current challenges were years in the making, and there will be no quick or easy fixes. Had the CNMI GOP not squandered all the funds provide to us by the federal government in the last three years, things would be a lot easier for all of us today.

I have always said that tourists from mainland China are welcome to visit our islands, but they should be vetted and our borders must remain secure—and for that, we need help from our federal partners.

In the meantime, and out of necessity, we must—and are working to—shift our focus and resources to more secure and reliable markets with allied nations.

As governor I am committed to do everything in my power to stabilize our fiscal condition, ensure our security, continue to deliver essential services, and execute plans for long-term improvements in infrastructure, education, and economic development. And I will be transparent about our progress—as well as our struggles—every step of the way.

May God bless the people of the Northern Marianas.

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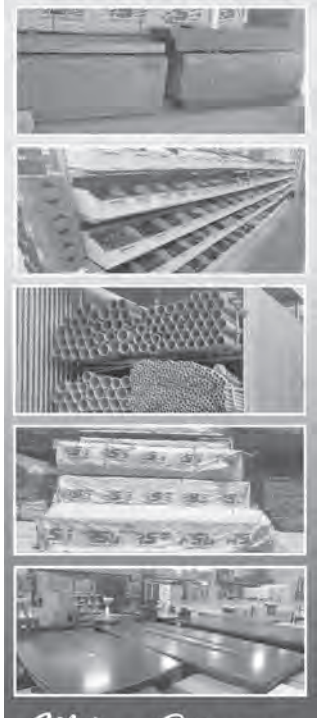
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Sanitary inspections of food establishments for June 2024

During the month of June, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Environmental Health Disease Prevention conducted sanitary inspections on retail, eating, and drinking establishments. Through this release, EHDP is providing names of establishments by inspection grade, names of establishments which were ordered to close for serious violations of health and sanitation standards. For these establishments, EHDP provides the suspension date and the date they were certified to resume operations.

Classifications for Food Safety Rating for an establishment receiving a score of:

- 0-10 demerits Grade A
- 11-20 demerits Grade B
- 21-30 demerits Grade C
- > 30 closure/suspension

Grade A

- Charing's Kitchen, Koblerville
- Sura Restaurant, Garapan
- Revolving 360 Restaurant, Garapan
- ABC Stores 702, Garapan
- Smile Bar, Garapan
- New Plus Trading, San Vicente
- Garapan Public Market, Garapan
- Majesty Chinese Restaurant, Garapan
- Jess Multi-Farm, Kagman
- Saipan Beach Hotel Restaurant, Chalan Piao
- Party & Beyond, Gualo Rai
- Pacific Grocers, As Lito
- Godfather's Bar & Restaurant, Garapan
- Island Grindz & Crafts, Koblerville
- Country House Restaurant, Garapan
- Friendly Market, San Jose
- Post Chocolate, Susupe
- De' Cafree Coffee, Chalan Kanoa
- Party & Beyond, Gualo Rai
- Sun Palace Hotel (Retail), Susupe
- Ocean Star Market, San Vicente
- Chalan Kiya Mobile Station, Chalan Kiya
- Cha Cafe & Bistro, Garapan
- Mama's Kitchen, Kagman
- Lucky Star Market, Chalan Kanoa
- Winchell's Donut House, Chalan Laulau
- Oleai Beach Bar & Grill, San Jose
- L&Y Market, Gualo Rai
- Cery Store, Fina Sisu
- Chinen Ice Candy, Garapan
- Garapan Restaurant, Garapan
- M & M Fish Mart, Garapan
- New Vegetable Plus, Lower Navy Hill
- Jonny's Bar and Grill, Garapan
- Mango Six, Dandan
- Ming Ming Supermarket, Susupe
- Barny's Pizza, Susupe
- Kagman Laundry, Kagman
- Korean Restaurant Jang Won, Garapan
- Japanese Kinpachi Restaurant, Garapan
- Convenience Kinpachi, Garapan

Grade B

- Summer Snow Cafe, Susupe
- Everest Kitchen, Garapan
- Zaabder Thai Restaurant, Koblerville
- Winchell's Donut House, Susupe
- Ling Lin Store II, Kagman
- C Mart, Chalan Kanoa
- J's Restaurant, Gualo Rai
- Savory Bistro Cafe, Garapan

Tinian
Grade B

- The Hanger Catering, San Jose

Tinian
Grade C

- M&C Catering, San Jose

Establishment ordered closed for serious violations of health and sanitation standards.

- Majesty Restaurant and Catering, Garapan. Closed (06/04/2024) Opened (06/06/2024)
- Party and Beyond, Gualo Rai. Closed (06/10/2024) Opened (06/13/2024)

For more information, contact the EHDP office at (670) 236-2022/27/28, or email the Administrator of EHDP, John Tagabuel, at john.tagabuel@chcc.health.

For more information about CHCC programs, follow EHDP on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out its website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

This press release may be found online at http://www.chcc.health/pressrelease.php. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

DESIGN/BUILD FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A VEHICULAR RAMP ROTA WEST HARBOR COMMERCIAL MARINA, ROTA, CNMI
PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-009-24

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed proposals, subject to the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposals (the "RFP") and other contract provisions, for awarding a Design/Build Vehicular Ramp construction project at the Rota West Harbor Commercial Marina, Rota, CNMI. The Design/Build RFP Package and other considerations will be available for pick up beginning ***June 21, 2024,*** upon payment of $200.00 in cash, cashier's check or certified check to the CPA Accounting Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Terminal Building, Saipan International Airport.

Proposals will be received at the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, 2nd Floor-Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport no later than ***2:00 P.M. CHST, July 24, 2024.*** Proposals received after the date/time indicated above will not be opened and will be returned to the Proposer.

Each proposal shall be accompanied by a bid bond, a certified check, or a cashier's check in the amount no less than ***ten percent (10%) of the total proposal amount.*** Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All proposals shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Date: _____
FREDERICK PANGELINAN
Acting Executive Director

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID

ITB24-DPS-42400108

SUBMISSION DATE: July 22, 2024
TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Purchase of One (1) Class "I" Vehicle for the Department of Public Safety, Saipan Highway Safety Office"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL AT (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BUILDING NO. 1301, ASCENCION DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO MS. MARGARITA CAMACHO AT THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE VIA EMAIL OR TELEPHONE AT mdlgcamacho@dps.gov.mp or at (670) 664 - 9122.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ Anthony I. Macaranas
COMMISSIONER, DPS

/S/ Brien S. Nicholas, Jr.
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-014-24

SUBMISSION DATE: JULY 30, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"REPAIRS OF TYPHOON MAWAR DAMAGES AT THE BTM ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP AT THE COMMONWONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) ACCOUNTING OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEGINNING JUNE 28, 2024. AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $50.00 SHALL BE PAID TO CPA BEFORE A BIDDER MAY OBTAIN THE BID PACKAGE. PAYMENTS SHALL BE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, OR CREDIT CARD.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "REPAIRS OF TYPHOON DAMAGES AT THE BTM ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (IFB-014-24)" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., JULY 30, 2024. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

LEO B. TUDELA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: _____

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP NO.: DPW24-RFP No.: 42400116

SUBMISSION DATE: August 08, 2024 TIME: 9:00 A.M.

"Engineering and Design Related Services"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **July 05, 2024** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

There will be a **Pre-Proposal Conference** for this project on **July 23, 2024, 9:00 a.m. ChST.,** at the **DPW Building Code Conference Room,** Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **4:30 p.m. ChST., on July 31, 2024** to **Mr. Anhony A. Camacho, Acting Secretary of DPW,** Saipan. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ANTHONY A. CAMACHO
Acting Secretary, DPW

/S/ BRIEN SERS NICHOLAS JR.
Acting Director, Division of Procurement Services

CUC schedules power service interruptions on July 10, 11

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the general public that there will be scheduled power service interruptions on July 10 and 11, 2024

Wednesday, July 10, 2024
Power Service Interruption Time: 8:30am-12:30pm.

■ Area(s) Affected: Portions of Route 37, Chalan Monsingor Martinez

■ Momentary Service Interruption Time: 8:30am-9am and 12pm-12:30pm.

■ Area(s) Affected: Portions of Route 37, Chalan Monsingor Martinez, and As Lito Drive

■ Water Wells) Affected: None

■ Wastewater Facilities Affected: A-15

■ Traffic Lights Affected: None

■ Purpose: To allow CUC linemen to replace two (2) rotted, 45-foot wooden power poles.

Thursday, July 11, 2024
Power Service Interruption Time: 8:30am-11:30am.

■ Area(s) Affected: Portions of Kagman Ill Phase IV (Lalanghita Road, Lalangha Avenue, and Kahet Avenue

■ Water Wells) Affected: None

■ Wastewater Facilities Affected: None

■ Traffic Lights Affected: None

■ Purpose: To allow CUC linemen replace a rotted, 45-foot wooden power pole.

CUC appreciates the public's cooperation and understanding as it works to ensure reliable service for its customers. For more information, contact CUC's hotline at (670) 236-4333, visit its website, and monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(PR)***

Bill removing statute of limitations of elderly abuse and exploitation makes voting file

GUAM—With the support of his legislative colleagues, Democrat Senator Dwayne T.D. San Nicolas successfully moved Bill No. 243-37 (COR) onto the third reading file during regular session on July 2 at the Guam Congress Building in Hagåtña.

San Nicolas

Bill 243-37 will remove the statute of limitations for financial and property exploitation of an elderly person or individual with disability, should it pass into local law. According to the National Council on Aging, up to five million older Americans are abused every year, and the annual loss by victims of financial abuse is estimated to be at least $36.5 billion. The council also states that in about 60% of elderly abuse incidents, the perpetrator is a family member, usually the spouse or the children of the victim.

"The number of exploited elderly is astounding and justifies the creation of legislation to combat this issue," said San Nicolas, author of Bill 243-37, a first of its kind in the nation. "All of these findings by the National Council on Aging are alarming, something which our *manåmko'* and persons with disabilities need to be protected from by putting the law on their side. Financial exploitation of our *manåmko'* and individuals with disabilities is a heinous crime that should not have a statute of limitations."

If enacted into Guam law, this legislation will remove the statute of limitations in cases of elderly and disabled individuals' financial exploitation and abuse. With this legislative measure, elderly and individuals with disabilities, victims of financial exploitation and abuse, will be able to pursue justice without the added worry of a deadline to file a lawsuit.

"As a government entity that serves the people, the Guam Legislature needs to enact legislation that would protect and help the manamko' and people with disabilities find justice in incidents of financial exploitation and abuse," he said.

Moreover, Guam Attorney General Douglas Moylan endorsed the bill during its public hearing on April 1.

"It's about time," said Moylan at the April 1 public hearing. "In our court system, there are too many of our manåmko' that are being found out in guardianship cases and in probate cases that their lifetime savings have been taken from them, especially from their own family members that are 'caregivers'. As we age everybody's memories through the natural process become not as sharp as they used to be. I applaud the sponsor of the bill, Senator San Nicolas, for taking up this challenge. Our code is in need of protection right now. Our manåmko' are in need of protection out there. They need to have the tools to do that. We, the AG's office, fully endorse it."

This shall become effective upon enactment. ***(PR)***

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID

ITB NO.: ITB24-ZB-42400123

SUBMISSION DATE: JULY 30, 2024 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) CLASS 'F' VEHICLE FOR CNMI ZONING BOARD"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG NO. 1301, ASCENSION DRIVE, CAPTIOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO THE ZONING BOARD OFFICE BY JULY 19, 2024, TO MRS. THERESE T. OGUMORO VIA EMAIL AT therese.ogumoro@cnmizoning.com

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ THERESE T. OGUMORO
ADMINISTRATOR, ZB

/S/ BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cnmiports.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 08-2024

Opening date: June 24, 2024 **Closing date: July 12, 2024**

Location: SAIPAN	**SALARY**
Position(s): (1) ARFF Mechanic II	PL 6/1 to 6/12 ($9.27/hr to $15.85/hr)
(1) Executive/Board Secretary	PL 17/1 to 17/12 ($15.85/hr to $27.12/hr)
Location: TINIAN	**SALARY**
Position(s): (4) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance-I	PL 5/1 to 5/12 ($8.83/hr to $15.10/hr)
Location: ROTA SEAPORT	**SALARY**
Position(s): (1) General Maintenance-II	PL 5/1 to 5/12 ($8.83/hr to $15.10/hr)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the ***CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office, Tinian International Airport, or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.*** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, July 12, 2024.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays and austerity, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin, Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

LEO B. TUDELA
Executive Director

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
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www.dcrm.gov.mp

Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Richard V. Salas
Director, DCRM

PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE CRM AGENCY OFFICIALS

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang through the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM), hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 09, 2024 at 2:30PM at the DCRM Learning Center, Suite 301, Gualo Rai Center II, on Chalan Pale Arnold Road in Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.

Virtual participation will continue and encouraged via video conferencing through Zoom link: hhtps://zoom.us/j (Meeting ID: 6706648315) or join via telephone by calling the DCRM office at (670) 664-8300 for connection assistance and most updated information as Zoom meeting access code may change.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
   A. Call to Order
   B. Roll Call
   C. Adoption of Agenda
   D. Adoption of June 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. PERMIT APPLICATION REVIEW
   1. CRM Permit Application No. TMS-2024-045
      Project: EXPANSION OF THE HAWAIIAN ROCK QUARRY OPERATIONS
      Applicant: HAWAIIAN ROCK PRODUCTS
      Hawaiian Rock Products is proposing to expand its Tinian Rock Quarry Operations to the adjacent leased public properties identified as Lot Nos. 266 T 11, measuring about 16,949 sq. m., and 266 T 12, measuring about 15,856 sq. m., or a combined total of about 32,805 sq. m. of public lands.
      a. Agencies' Discussions
      b. Agencies' Determination – Final Permit Decision
IV. OTHER MATTERS
V. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and submit written or oral testimony regarding the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

/s/ RICHARD V. SALAS
Director, DCRM

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 134

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

A middle ground on presidential immunity

The U.S. Supreme Court ended its term Monday with a highly anticipated decision that provides American presidents with a modicum of immunity from criminal charges. The case was ostensibly about Donald Trump, but in fact the ruling sets guidelines intended to ensure the nation—regardless of which man, woman or party holds the Oval Office—doesn't become mired in a series of retaliatory and vindictive prosecutions.

Progressives, fixated on Trump, argue that the 6-3 decision "creates a law-free zone around the president," as Justice Sonia Sotomayor described it in her dissent. But it does nothing of the sort.

"The president enjoys no immunity for his unofficial acts," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote for the majority," and not everything the president does is official. The president is not above the law. But Congress may not criminalize the president's conduct in carrying out the responsibilities of the executive branch under the Constitution."

Note that the court explicitly rejected Trump's claim of absolute immunity. "Trump asserts a far broader immunity," the majority opinion holds, "than the limited one we have recognized." But the idea, put forth by special prosecutor Jack Smith and the government that a president has no special protection is equally pernicious. Would it be good for the country to allow a former president to face politically motivated prosecutions involving a policy dispute?

In the current political climate, such concerns are not theoretical.

"Virtually every president is criticized for insufficiently enforcing some aspect of federal law (such as drug, gun, immigration or environmental laws)," Roberts wrote. "An enterprising prosecutor in a new administration may assert that a previous president violated that broad statute. Without immunity, such types of prosecutions of ex-presidents could quickly become routine."

The decision will require federal courts to hold evidentiary hearings to determine which actions charged by Smith amount to "official" and "unofficial" acts. But it in no way stops the government from prosecuting Trump for actions he took that were unrelated to his duties as president. Trump's attorney conceded during oral arguments that some of the conduct that caught Smith's attention was related to unofficial actions.

Despite the apocalyptic protestations of the dissenting liberal justices, the majority has carved out a middle ground that rejects the extreme arguments made by both the former president and the special prosecutor who pursues him. Trump—or any other president—is not above the law. But neither should they be victims of politically motivated criminal prosecutions.

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Please help us! Tell us how you will STOP and fix the high food, gasoline and home prices and how you will fix the border crisis!
I will get rid of Trump!!
I will get rid of Biden!!
USA
REPUBLICANS
DEMOCRATS
OUR DIVIDED NATION!
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After the Supreme Court's immunity ruling, can Donald Trump still be tried for Jan. 6?

By HARRY LITMAN
Los Angeles Times

Harry Litman is the host of the "Talking Feds" podcast and the "Talking San Diego" speaker series.

The Supreme Court ended a tumultuous term with one final sledgehammer blow on Monday. Its decision on Donald Trump's claim of immunity from criminal charges forecloses any possibility that he will be tried for Jan. 6 before the election, substantially guts the prosecution and reshapes the Constitution to place the president singularly beyond the reach of criminal law.

The opinion was even more expansive in its grant of presidential immunity than commentators anticipated after the oral argument suggested the conservative majority was headed that way. And while it theoretically permits prosecution of some of the long list of Trump's pernicious and treacherous acts in the weeks after the 2020 election, it erects a series of legal roadblocks and presumptions that make it anyone's guess whether Trump will ever face accountability under the indictment.

The court's essential holding is that constitutional principles of separation of powers forbid the criminal prosecution of a former president for "official acts" that took place during his term, while allowing it for "unofficial" acts. The 6-3 decision broke down along familiar lines, with the conservative majority continuing its project of remaking the law and the structure of the federal government.

How to draw the line between official and unofficial conduct? The court provides several criteria that, albeit somewhat opaque, clearly protect swaths of conduct that would strike nearly everyone as corrupt and lawless—not least much of what Trump undertook after the 2020 election.

For starters, the court prescribes absolute immunity for any exercise of "core constitutional powers." These include at a minimum the enumerated presidential powers of Article 2 of the Constitution, such as acting as commander in chief of the armed forces, issuing pardons and appointing judges. A president acting within these areas is untouchable.

Importantly, the court holds that this immunity precludes any consideration of motive. So a president who, for example, issues a pardon in return for a bribe or fires an executive branch official out of racial animus is just as protected from the law as one who takes such actions for appropriate and conventional reasons.

This could authorize some of the most vicious and problematic presidential conduct. There is no apparent reason, for example, that it doesn't encompass what had been taken as a devastating hypothetical offered by Judge Florence Y. Pan of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. circuit: a president's use of Navy SEALs to assassinate a political rival. If the reason for a president's use of commander-in-chief powers is outside the bounds of inquiry, such conduct is indistinguishable from a conventional military mission.

Motive is the soul of the criminal law. It's what divides conduct society accepts from conduct for which we put people in prison. The declaration that it has no role to play in determining a president's criminal liability is nearly tantamount to making him a king.

Yet the court's decision goes considerably further. It immunizes not just core constitutional functions but also any conduct within the outer perimeter of executive authority — the same capacious standard that already applies to civil lawsuits over presidential conduct.

And though there is some debate on this point, the court appears to go even further by imposing a presumption of immunity for conduct outside that perimeter unless the government shows that a prosecution would "pose no dangers of intrusion on the authority and functions of the Executive Branch."

How this will play out in the Jan. 6 prosecution is to some extent for U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan to try to figure out, with Trump challenging every move she makes along the way. The court emphasizes that distinguishing "the President's official actions from his unofficial ones can be difficult" and may necessitate a "fact-specific" inquiry into their context (not including the president's motive).

But the court drops some very strong hints about which aspects of the prosecution are precluded. It essentially says that Trump's alleged efforts to level false accusations of

See AFTER on Page 9

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Little islands could spur big trouble in the South China Sea

By ELIZABETH SHACKELFORD
Chicago Tribune

Elizabeth Shackelford is the Magro Family Distinguished Visitor in International Affairs at Dartmouth College and a foreign affairs columnist for the Chicago Tribune.

The South China Sea has become one of the world's most dangerous potential flashpoints. Territorial disputes in this area—often over uninhabitable rocks—have been a source of conflict and competing claims for a century. But China has become more aggressive recently with its claims to the area. With great power competition heating up worldwide, this could translate to big trouble.

In June, Chinese coast guard ships rammed and boarded Philippine navy vessels, using machetes, axes and hammers to damage the boats and threaten the crews. It was the latest and most violent in a series of confrontations between China and the Philippines in the area.

At the core of the clash was Second Thomas Shoal, a submerged reef in the Spratly Islands, a little more than 100 nautical miles west of the Philippines, where the Philippine navy has maintained a presence with a handful of marines on a grounded Navy transport ship since 1999. The Philippine vessels were attacked as they were resupplying the outpost.

Why such violence over a rocky feature that doesn't even qualify as land? For the Philippines, it's a matter of sovereignty and standing up to the Chinese government's overreach. Under international law, this shoal falls well within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone.

For many others, including the United States, China's aggressive claim to Second Thomas Shoal is part of a bigger threat to freedom of navigation in critical shipping lanes and to accessing a wealth of natural resources, from massive oil and natural gas reserves to abundant fish and seafood.

Several countries in the region lay claim to some of the islands, rocks and territorial waters of the South China Sea, but China's claims are the most sweeping by far. They are demonstrated by the nine-dash line first detailed in a map China issued in 1947, which encompasses nearly the entirety of the sea, in an awkward U-shape stretching far south of China's shores.

The nine-dash line is such a source of angst that Vietnam banned last year's blockbuster movie "Barbie" because it portrays a childlike map that appears to show a dotted trail extending into the ocean from where China would be on the Asian landmass.

China has tried to strengthen its claim by expanding the size of islands it physically controls and by building new islands and militarizing them.

By the 1990s, China expanded its claims beyond islands and rocks to include the water itself, the seabed below and the airspace above. This is in clear violation of the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention—a treaty that China not only signed but also helped negotiate.

The shipping lanes mean these local skirmishes have global implications, and potentially global responses, since more than 20% of all global trade and 60% of maritime trade pass through these waters. A meaningful threat to the global economy doesn't stay local for long.

This is a big part of America's interest in maintaining peace and security in the region. Freedom of navigation is one of the oldest principles of international law, going back 400 years. The United States has made the defense of freedom of navigation worldwide a core U.S. national security priority.

But an even riskier element comes from U.S. security commitments in the region—one in particular. The United States engages in defense cooperation with Vietnam, but has no clear commitments to come to its defense. The U.S. government has enshrined into law its commitment to assist Taiwan in case of an attack, but the nature of how we would do so remains intentionally ambiguous.

The Philippines, however, is a treaty ally with whom we've clearly agreed to mutual defense. This means that an armed attack on the Philippines would invoke America's commitment to defend it. If that attack comes from China, the United States could quickly find itself in direct conflict with a near-peer global power.

For decades, it wasn't at all clear how the Philippines' claims to these disputed islands factored into that commitment. This suited the U.S. government, since ambiguity was a deterrent to any provocations by the Philippines against China's competing claims.

But that all changed in 2019, when then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stated publicly that the islands were included in that pact. Today, U.S. government guidelines make clear that the commitment applies to Philippines assets anywhere within the South China Sea.

The good news is that the United States and its partners in the region are eager, so far, to avoid full-scale war. Since the most recent skirmish, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has publicly stated that his country is "not in the business to instigate wars," and his government indicated that it would not invoke its treaty with the United States over the incident.

Avoiding war with China, though, requires the Philippines and its Western ally to strike the right balance by not escalating tensions with China but also not emboldening it to go further.

It will also depend on how keen China is to avoid war, and given its recent actions, that might not be a shared priority.

June was African-American Music Appreciation Month

Let's hip hop back to June for a villanelle on Spoonie Gee. When my son Jimmy, a Mt. Carmel HS graduate, was listening incessantly to Ludacris, by the way Ludacris just got his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, I asked him if he had ever heard of Spoonie Gee. He said no so I wrote a villanelle in tribute to Spoonie Gee, the man many refer to as the Godfather of Hip Hop. I first read it at the West Las Vegas Arts Center at a monthly Poet's Corner. The Poet's Corner was founded in 1997 by Black poet Keith Brantley, its host for twenty years. The villanelle's original title was "Ludicritus Ubiquitous for Spoonie Gee." I changed the title to, "Do You Remember Spoonie Gee?" and recorded it in 2012. If readers aren't familiar with a villanelle they may have read Dylan Thomas' famous poem, Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night. That poem is a villanelle.

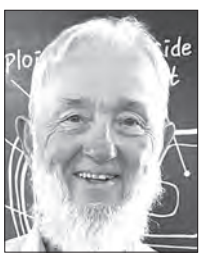
DO YOU REMEMBER SPOONIE GEE?

"Oh rapper with hip hop cd
in the old ghetto's consulate
do you remember Spoonie Gee
chill through boom box or DVD
while Tupac Shakur lies in state
Oh rapper with hip hop cd
M&M calls on Doctor Dre
and lets the dogs out at the gate
does he remember Spoonie Gee
still by the light of MTV
vanquished Vanilla Ice finds his fate
Oh rapper with hip hop cd
and still in free style rivalry
young boys in the hood challenge hate
do they remember Spoonie Gee
Iceberg Slim hands out blunts for free
four anorexic groupies wait
Oh rapper with hip hop cd
do you remember Spoonie Gee."

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka "Pepe Batbon" Connolly, the Poet Laureate of Tinian, enjoys moon and stargazing.



By the way Spoonie Gee 'Godfather of Hip Hop' has been described as 'the original gangsta rapper.' Readers may know Ludacris as Tej Parker in 'The Fast and the Furious' films. For my inspiration readers might check out Oscar Wilde's villanelle 'Theocritus'. The similarities might surprise you.

AFTER

From page 8

election fraud in Georgia with the aid of a Justice Department functionary are off-limits. That's because the charge implicates the president's official power to investigate and prosecute crimes.

The opinion also strongly suggests that the alleged plot to strong-arm Vice President Mike Pence into violating the Constitution may be protected because it pertains to the interactions of the executive branch's top two officials.

And the court seems to want to give a pass to Trump's incendiary rhetoric near the Capitol on Jan. 6 on the basis that communication with the public is part of what the president does.

The only aspect of the indictment that the court seems disposed to preserve is the alleged extensive effort to set up fraudulent slates of electors. Even there, however, the court prescribes a detailed inquiry that puts the burden on special counsel Jack Smith's team to counter Trump's argument that his conduct was official "because it was undertaken to ensure the integrity and proper administration of the federal election."

Even if Trump loses the election and the case is allowed to proceed beyond this year, it will require more time-consuming legal combat. Every aspect of the application of the court's opinion to the case could be appealed to the D.C. circuit and the Supreme Court.

And where does it all come from, this fundamental reordering of our tripartite system of government and the principle — to which the court continues to give lip service—that the president is not above the law?

The answer is no more than the court's view that the president must be able to take bold and energetic action without worrying about subsequent criminal prosecution. The justices are not, strictly speaking, interpreting any provision of the Constitution but rather applying their notion of what makes for an effective president. The conservative majority is essentially grafting its political science principles onto constitutional structure and using them to drive a truck through the principle of equality before the law.

The majority dismisses the liberal dissenters' insistence that the decision puts the president above the law as amounting to "ignoring the Constitution's separation of powers and the Court's precedent and instead fear mongering on the basis of extreme hypotheticals about a future where the president 'feels empowered to violate a federal criminal law.'"

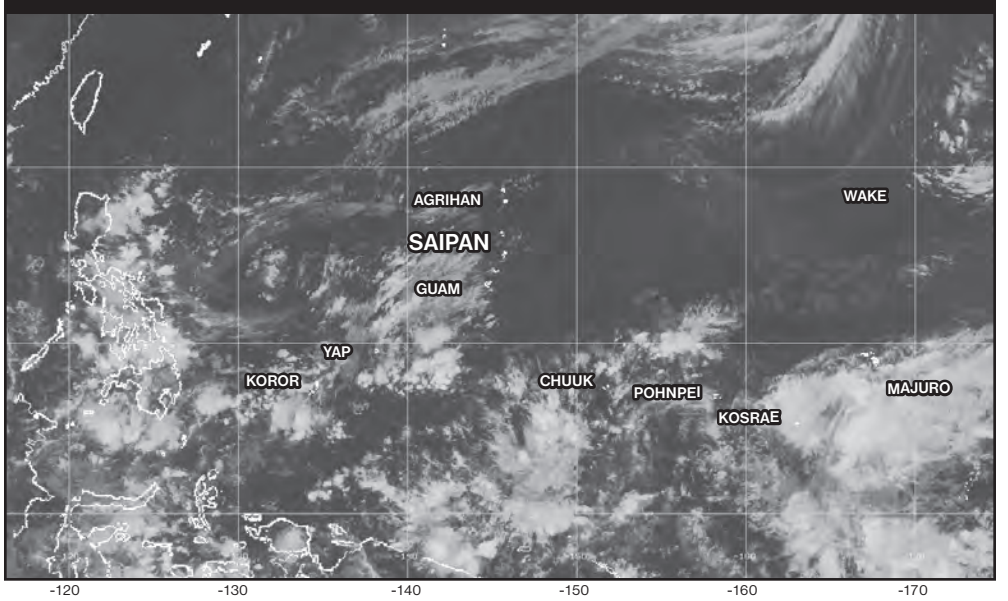
But there is nothing fearmongering, unrealistic or extreme about those worries. They concern a reality that is right before the justices' eyes. They have chosen to ignore it, ensuring that justice for the most serious assault on the Constitution in our history will be much delayed and largely denied.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Isolated showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 87. East wind 9 to 11 mph.	Isolated showers. Mostly sunny, with a high near 87. East wind 11 to 13 mph.	Partly sunny.	Partly sunny.	Partly sunny.
87° 80°	87° 80°	87° 80°	87° 80°	87° 80°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:28 AM THURSDAY, JULY 4, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Trimmed back the showers today and tonight, as the expected coverage just never materialized, and now the upper-level low is starting to move away, and clearer skies to the east will start moving in. There is a disturbance farther east though, so added scattered showers Friday night to account for that. Also increased showers next week, when it looks like wet season might start trying to build in at last. Multi-model consensus that showers will start increasing in a fairly dramatic way. Hope so, as that could finally put an end to our drought.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	90° / 82°
Palau	Thunderstorm	84° / 76°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	87° / 79°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	88° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	85° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	55° / 46°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	84° / 71°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	91° / 80°
Honolulu	Showers	86° / 75°
London	Partly Cloudy	81° / 61°
Los Angeles	Sunny	77° / 62°
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	95° / 81°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	57° / 52°
Miami	Thunderstorm	86° / 79°
New York	Clear	80° / 67°
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	91° / 80°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	84° / 64°
Busan	Rain	73° / 70°
Rome	Sunny	90° / 70°
Salem	Thunderstorm	90° / 71°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	60° / 53°
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 73°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	94° / 78°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	87° / 70°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Monday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Tuesday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	4:45 AM	6:23 PM	-
Saturday	5:44 AM	7:18 PM	-
Sunday	6:42 AM	8:07 PM	-
Monday	7:38 AM	8:51 PM	-
Tuesday	8:31 AM	9:30 PM	-

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:08 AM	Low Tide	1.55
5:45 AM	High Tide	2.09
1:30 PM	Low Tide	-0.29
8:56 PM	High Tide	2.04

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2024

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	11:50AM	2:25PM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:50PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily
7C3471	5:50PM	9:30PM	Daily from July 17

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX77	4:05AM	7:00AM	1, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	5:30PM	9:55PM	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:20AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA184	11:50PM	5:45AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM +1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM +1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3472	11:05AM	4:40PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

HX76	7:25PM	2:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

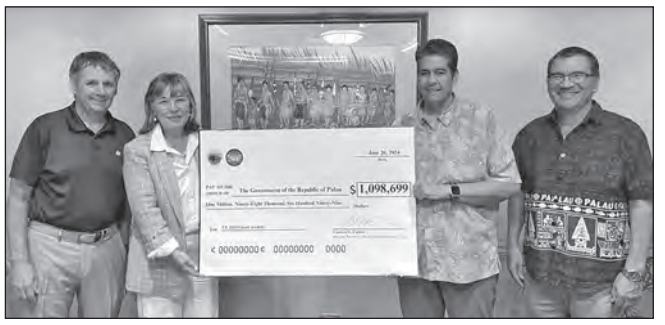
SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Cantor announces $7.1M in grants for Palau at bilateral economic consultations



OIA

U.S. Department of the Interior-Insular and International Affairs assistant secretary Carmen G. Cantor holds the other end of a facsimile giant check of $1,098,699 in Technical Assistance Program funding together with Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr.

OIA

U.S. Department of the Interior-Insular and International Affairs assistant secretary Carmen G. Cantor holds the other end of a facsimile giant check of $6 million in Compact of Free Association Infrastructure Maintenance grants for Fiscal Years 2022 together with Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr.

OIA

U.S. Department of the Interior-Insular and International Affairs assistant secretary Carmen G. Cantor in a meeting with Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr.

KOROR, Palau—U.S. Department of the Interior-Insular and International Affairs assistant secretary Carmen G. Cantor last week led the United States-Palau bilateral economic consultations with Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr. and other government officials to discuss financial and economic goals under the newly approved 2023 Compact Review Agreement.

Cantor announced $6 million in Compact of Free Association Infrastructure Maintenance grants for Fiscal Years 2022, 2023, and 2024, including $1,098,699 in Technical Assistance Program funding provided through the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), affirming the strong support that the United States has for the Republic of Palau.

"We are excited to hold our first bilateral Compact consultations as called for under the 2023 CRA, which was signed into law earlier this year," said Cantor. "I am also pleased to announce additional support for Palau through Compact Infrastructure Maintenance grants and the TAP grant awards for census, household listing, street naming, and home addressing projects, as well as water quality and monitoring at several water treatment plants in Palau."

Following the bilateral economic consultations as provided for under the Compact of Free Association relationship that was recently renewed between the United States and Palau, Cantor announced $6 million in Compact Infrastructure Maintenance grants representing three years of United States' contributions to complement Palau's maintenance of education and health facilities, water systems, the Palau National Capitol, road failure repairs, and other projects of importance to the people of Palau.

Three TAP grants, totaling $1,098,699, were also announced for the following projects;

■ $549,805 for a Household Listing project to update and plot all households in Palau. Funds will also support census outreach efforts in Palau and development of baseline data to assess economic development strategies and food security in the island country;

■ $310,000 to develop a uniform street naming and home addressing system for Palau, to include street naming guidelines and GIS mapping of roads; and

■ $238,894 for the Bureau of Reclamation to support the Palau Public Utility Corporation to conduct water treatment investigations and implement improvements to advance public health and water security at three water treatment plants in Palau.

The Assistant Secretary-Insular and International Affairs and the Office of Insular Affairs carry out the Secretary of the Interior's responsibilities for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, OIA administers and oversees federal assistance under the Compacts of Free Association to the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The OIA also administers a discretionary Technical Assistance Program for all the Insular Areas. Find information about OIA and its work on www.doi.gov/oia, Facebook, X, and YouTube. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK • Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

WATER QUALITY REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

Your 2023 CUC Water Quality Report is now available on-line! This year, we have a separate report for each island: Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. These reports contain important information about the source and quality of your drinking water.

Please open the following web sites to view what contaminants were detected in your water during 2023 and to learn more about your drinking water.

For Saipan, go to https://www.cucgov.org/spn2023
For Tinian, go to https://www.cucgov.org/tin2023
For Rota, go to https://www.cucgov.org/rota2023

If you need the report translated, wish to speak with someone about the report, or would like a paper copy delivered or e-mailed to you, please call CUC at (670) 664-4282.

RA AYOORA REPOODIL AMMWELIL SCHAAL

Repoodil yóómw 2023 CUC Ammwelil Schaal aa yoor online! Ráágh yeel, ai ayoora repoodngáli falúw kka: Seipél, Tchiliyól, me Luuta. E lo llól repood kkal arongorong ikka e impotanti reel milikka e toowow me ammwelil schaal iye ów ghal úlúmi.

Emmwel ubwe suughi website ikka e amwirimwiritiw ubwe amwuri meta kka e nngaw iye e lo llól yóómw schaal llól ráághil 2023 me ubwe metaff reel schaal iye ughal úlúmi.

Ngáli Seipél, mweteló reel https://www.cucgov.org/spn2023
Ngáli Tchiliyól, mweteló reel https://www.cucgov.org/tin2023
Ngáli Luuta, mweteló reel https://www.cucgov.org/rota2023

Ngare eyoor arongorong iye u mwuschel rebwe seleti, ngare u mwuschel kkapas ngáli escháy reel arongorong yeel, me ngare u mwuschel rebwe afanga ngare e-mail ngalúgh pappid yeel, fafailó CUC reel (670) 664-4282.

RIPOT KUÅLIDÅT HÅNOM ESTA MANAGUAHA

Iyon-mu 2023 na Ripot nu i Kuålidåt Hånom i CUC managuahayi på´gu giya on-line! På´gu na såkkan, in na´guahayi siparåo na ripot para kada´ isla: Saipan, Tinian, yan Luta. Esti na ripot siha masaguaniniyi impottånti na infotmasion put i tutuhonña yan kuålidåt put i Hånom ni un gigimin.

Put fabot baba i tinattiyi na web sites para un atan håfa siha mankutchinu ni masodda´ gi hålum i hånom-mu gi durántin 2023 na såkkan para un ke´tungu´ más put i hånom ni un gigimin.

Para Saipan, hånao para https://www.cucgov.org/spn2023
Para Tinian, hånao para https://www.cucgov.org/tin2023
Para Luta, hånao para https://www.cucgov.org/rota2023

Yanggin un nisissita i ripot matránslåda, ya malagu´ håo para un kuentusi håyi put i ripot, pat malagu' håo mahanåogui kopian påppit osino para u ma- "e-mail" kopia guatu giya hågu, put fabot ågang i CUC gi (670) 664-4282.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION TO BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-ITB-013-24
SUBMISSION DATE: JULY 12, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"SALE OF SURPLUS GOVERNMENT VEHICLES"

THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) INVITES BIDDERS TO BID ON THE SALE OF SURPLUS GOVERNMENT VEHICLES LOCATED AT THE TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND SEAPORT.

THE BID PACKAGE WHICH INCLUDES BID PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS OF SALE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING JUNE 26, 2024 AT THE CPA ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND ONE (1) COPY OF THEIR BIDS IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SALE OF SURPLUS GOVERNMENT VEHICLES **(ITB-013-24)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., JULY 12, 2024.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

LEO B. TUDELA DATE: _____
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-012-24
SUBMISSION DATE: JULY 16, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ONE (1) BRAND NEW 4X4 PICK-UP TRUCK TO THE BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING JUNE 13, 2024 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF ONE (1) BRAND NEW PICK-UP TRUCK TO THE BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT **(IFB-012-24)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR **BEFORE 2:00 P.M., JULY 16, 2024. A 10% BID BOND OR CASHIER'S CHECK PAYABLE TO CPA SHALL BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID DOCUMENTS.** BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

LEO B. TUDELA DATE: _____
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

78th Liberation Day Parade

PHOTOS BY RACQUEL FLOYD

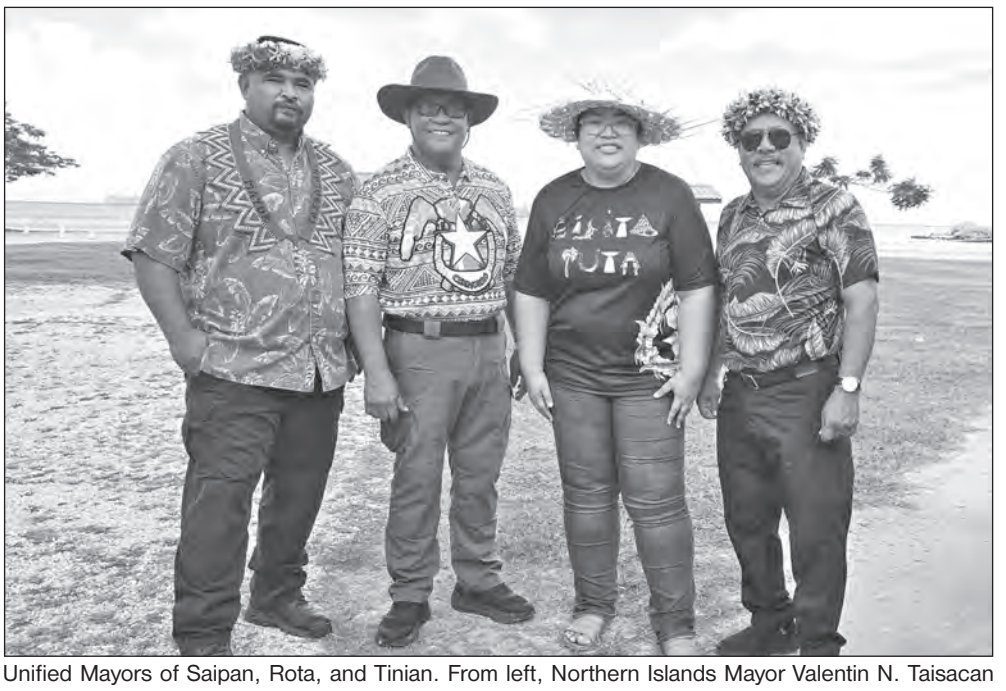
First lady Wella Palacios waves to the crowd during yesterday's 78th Liberation Day Parade along Beach Road.

Saipan Mayor Ramon B. "RB" Camacho comes down from the golf cart he used for the parade.

Gary Sword places a mic near the representative of the Bangladeshi float during their 3-minute presentation.

Guam Gov. Lou Guerrero, sixth from left, poses with U.S. military officials.

American Memorial Park Superintendent Barbara Alberti waves the U.S. and CNMI flags while heading to the grand stand.



Unified Mayors of Saipan, Rota, and Tinian. From left, Northern Islands Mayor Valentin N. Taisacan Jr., Saipan Mayor Ramon B. "RB" Camacho, Rota Mayor Aubry M. Hocog, and Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan.

A U.S. Air Force KC-135 Tanker flyby signaled the start of the parade at 10am.

Miss Earth 2023 Zowie Cruz aboard her pink Mustang during the 78th Liberation Day Parade.

Some of the crowd started to grill before the parade starts.

Young Gunz riders show off their two-wheel steads during the 78th Liberation Day Parade.

Business

Fashion store Threads Guam opens on Saipan

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

Threads Guam opened its very first outlet outside of the U.S. territory after setting shop around 132 miles north on Saipan at the Town House Shopping Center in Chalan Kanoa.

The women's fashion store unveiled its 1,360-square-foot boutique with much fanfare last June 15, including a performace from local artist Tom Basa and his band. The evening prior it held a soft opening for VIP guests that included government officials and local business leaders.

General manager Al Rivera, who founded Threads Guam with his wife Karina eight years ago, said they're thrilled to open their fourth store location on Saipan. He said it marks a momentous occasion for fashion enthusiasts on the island as the new location promises an elevated shopping experience with a diverse range of stylish apparel, footwear, and accessories.

What's more, Saipan customers don't have to fly to Guam anymore to shop and enjoy Threads Guam's signature fashion as they're literally on the island.

As for opening at the old capital of Saipan, Rivera said it's their intention to be a local fashion clothing store first rather than cater to tourists and that's why Threads Guam didn't even considered Garapan as a location for its first overseas store.

MARK RABAGO

Threads Guam opened its 1,360-square-foot boutique at the Town House Shopping Center in Chalan Kanoa last June 15.

MARK RABAGO

Threads Guam owners Al and Karina Rivera at the opening of their women's fashion store at the Town House Shopping Center in Chalan Kanoa last June 15.

"A lot of our friends hate Garapan. The say it gets crowded. For us, we wanted to move away from the tourist area and into the villages where more of our customers actually live. Tourists are also not really our market. Our market is more so for the locals. Travelers coming in from the CNMI to Guam, they always make it a point to stop by our store so in terms of the clientele, we're already kind of established on Saipan," he said.

Rivera said as well as the jet-setters, Threads Guam also gets a lot of business from online shoppers from the CNMI so in a way opening a Saipan store helps save their local customers $8 in shipping via USPS.

Threads Guam's inventory is 90% manufactured out of Los Angeles and brands are made by designers out of the West Coast as well as Rivera's own wife, Karina, who is also a fashion designer.

"I've done our due diligence here in terms of what already was here as for boutiques and shopping centers. In terms of the difference, I think it's our exclusive products. Most companies will bring in maybe a hundred of the same dress for example. We would only bring in six. So, everybody won't come to a party and have the same dress."

MARK RABAGO

Tom Basa and his band provided the entertainment during the opening of Threads Guam at the Town House Shopping Center in Chalan Kanoa last June 15.

While Threads Guam on Saipan doesn't have an opening promotion, they do have a loyalty program where each dollar spent translates to a point that you can redeem for anything in the store once you total 500 points.

Threads Guam started as a small 10- by 20-foot store in the village of Tumon in 2016. It opened a second location in Hagatna a year later before adding a third branch in Dededo in 2018. COVID-19 momentarily halted Threads Guam's growth in 2020 and it also caused the closing of its original Tumon branch.

Interestingly, Rivera, who used to be the sales manager of *Pacific Daily News*, said the pandemic spurred a lot of interest on its online business and their sales skyrocketed.

Threads Guam is open Monday through Saturday, from 10am to 7pm. For more information, go to their website at https://www.threads-guam.com/.

JULY 4TH HOLIDAY RUSH IS ON

TSA expects to screen record number of travelers this weekend

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Nicole Lindsay thought she could beat the holiday-week travel rush by booking an early-morning flight. It didn't work out that way.

"I thought it wouldn't be that busy, but it turned out to be quite busy," the Baltimore resident said as she herded her three daughters through Palm Beach International Airport in Florida. "It was a lot of kids on the flight, so it was kind of noisy—a lot of crying babies."

Lindsay said the flight was full, but her family arrived safely to spend a few days in Port Saint Lucie, so she was not complaining.

Airlines hope the outcome is just as good for millions of other passengers scheduled to take holiday flights over the next few days.

AAA forecasts that 70.9 million people will travel at least 50 miles (80 kilometers) from home over a nine-day stretch that began June 27, a 5% increase over the comparable period around the Fourth of July last year. Most of those people will drive, and the motor club says traffic will be the worst between 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. most days.

Federal officials expect air-travel records to fall as Americans turn the timing of July Fourth on a Thursday into a four-day—or longer—holiday weekend.

The Transportation Security Administration predicts that its officers will screen more than 3 million travelers at U.S. airports on Sunday. That would top the June 23 mark of more than 2.99 million. American Airlines said Sunday is expected to be its busiest day of the entire summer; it plans more than 6,500 flights.

TSA was created after the terror attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, and replaced a collection of private security companies that were hired by airlines. Eight of the 10 busiest days in TSA's history have come this year, as the number of travelers tops pre-pandemic levels.

The head of the agency, David Pekoske, said Wednesday that TSA has enough screeners to handle the expected crowds this weekend and through the summer.

"We have been totally tested over the course of the last couple of months in being able to meet our wait-time standards of 10 minutes for a PreCheck passenger and 30 minutes for a standard passenger, so we are ready," Pekoske said on NBC's "Today" show.

Peggy Grundstrom, a frequent traveler from Massachusetts who flew to Florida to visit her daughter and granddaughter, said the line for security in Hartford, Connecticut, was unusually long.

"It was busier than I have personally seen in the past," Grundstrom said. "But, you know, I prefer to fly unless it's very local. I'm at a stage where I don't want to travel in a car for long periods of time."

Polls consistently show that a high percentage of Americans think the economy is poor, but that is not stopping them from traveling this summer.

GM will pay $146M in penalties because 5.9M older vehicles emit excess carbon dioxide

WASHINGTON (AP)—General Motors will pay nearly $146 million in penalties to the federal government because 5.9 million of its older vehicles do not comply with emissions and fuel economy standards.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said in a statement Wednesday that certain GM vehicles from the 2012 through 2018 model years did not comply with federal fuel economy requirements.

The penalty comes after the Environmental Protection Agency said its testing showed the GM pickup trucks and SUVs emit over 10% more carbon dioxide on average than GM's initial compliance testing claimed.

The EPA says the vehicles will remain on the road and cannot be repaired. The GM vehicles on average consume at least 10% more fuel than the window sticker numbers say, but the company won't be required to reduce the miles per gallon on the stickers, the EPA said.

"Our investigation has achieved accountability and upholds an important program that's reducing air pollution and protecting communities across the country," EPA Administrator Michael Regan said.

GM said in a statement that it complied with all regulations in pollution and mileage certification of its vehicles. The company said it is not admitting to any wrongdoing nor that it failed to comply with the Clean Air Act.

The problem stems from a change in testing procedures that the EPA put in place in 2016, GM spokesman Bill Grotz said.

Owners don't have to take any action because there is no defect in the vehicles, Grotz said.

"We believe this voluntary action is the best course of action to resolve the outstanding issues with the federal government," he said.

The enforcement action involves about 4.6 million full-size pickups and SUVs and about 1.3 million midsize SUVs, the EPA said. The affected models include the Chevy Tahoe, Cadillac Escalade and Chevy Silverado. About 40 variations of GM vehicles are covered.

GM will be forced to give up credits used to ensure that manufacturers' greenhouse gas emissions are below the fleet standard for emissions that applies for that model year, the EPA said. In a quarterly filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, GM said it expects the total cost to resolve the matter will be $490 million.

Because GM agreed to address the excess emissions, EPA said it was not necessary to make a formal determination regarding the reasons for the excess pollution.

But David Cooke, senior vehicles analyst for the Union of Concerned Scientists, questioned how GM could not know that pollution exceeded initial test by more than 10% because the problem was so widespread on so many different vehicles. "You don't just make a more than 10% rounding error," he said.

Dan Becker, director of the Safe Climate Transport Campaign for the environmental group Center for Biological Diversity, said the violations by GM "show why automakers can't be trusted to protect our air and health, and why we need strong pollution rules. Supreme Court, take notice!"

Nation

Biden at 81: Sharp and focused

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden's conduct behind closed doors, in the Oval Office, on Air Force One and in meetings around the world is described in the same dual way by those who regularly see him in action.

He is often sharp and focused. But he also has moments, particularly later in the evening, when his thoughts seem jumbled and he trails off mid-sentence or seems confused. Sometimes he doesn't grasp the finer points of details. He occasionally forgets people's names, stares blankly and moves slowly around the room.

Biden's occasional struggles with focus may not be unusual for someone his age. But at 81 years old and seeking another four years in the White House, the moments when he's off his game have taken on a fresh resonance following his disastrous debate performance against Republican Donald Trump. The president appeared pale, gave nonsensical answers, stared blankly and lost his train of thought.

The June 27 faceoff alarmed Democrats and his financial backers, in part, because Biden seemed so much worse than during the almost routine moments when he's less sharp. And that has raised questions about whether he's up for a campaign that's only going to get nastier and whether he can effectively govern for another four years if he wins.

"We understand the concerns. We get it," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said this week. But she insisted Biden has no intention of stepping away from the campaign. "The president is clear-eyed and he is staying in the race."

But there have been other notable signs in recent weeks, from Biden's constrained itinerary during a recent visit to France to his flat demeanor during a big-dollar Hollywood fundraiser with top stars.

This story is based on interviews with two dozen people who have spent time with the president privately, some of whom were granted anonymity to discuss interactions that were not intended to be public.

> **» But sometimes confused and forgetful**

How he is in private is how he often is in public—uneven

The way Biden acts in private, according to regular observers, often tracks how he comes off publicly. In both settings, he can be commanding one day and halting another.

A day after his debate blunder, Biden's voice at a North Carolina rally was forceful, his eyes alert, his delivery confident. As he spoke, cheers filled the room.

"I give you my word as a Biden. I would not be running again if I didn't believe with all my heart and soul I can do this job," he told supporters. "Because, quite frankly, the stakes are too high."

But sometimes, Biden speaks so softly that it is difficult to make out his words even with a microphone. He'll stop mid-sentence and trail off during speeches. At other times he runs the room, leading the audience, joking and shaking hands with thrilled supporters, in clear command of the moment. His gait is often stiff, but sometimes he jogs.

His State of the Union speech earlier this year was widely seen as a confident and fiery speech that showed he was ready to take on Trump.

Through it all, public concern about Biden's fitness for another four years has been persistent. In an August 2023 poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, fully 77% of U.S. adults said Biden was too old to be effective for four more years. Not only did 89% of Republicans say that, but so did 69% of Democrats.

Missed opportunities to manage the issue

One person who spends time with Biden regularly said there have been visible signs of his aging over the past year that the president's team has failed to fully address. The debate performance accelerated concerns about what was already a slow-moving problem, even if Biden has offered assurances that he can still effectively govern.

Thousands evacuate as Northern California wildfire spreads

OROVILLE, Calif. (AP)—Firefighters lined roads to keep flames from reaching homes as helicopters dropped water on a growing wildfire Wednesday in Northern California that has forced at least 26,000 people to evacuate, as the state sweltered under extreme heat.

The Thompson fire broke out before noon Tuesday about 70 miles (110 kilometers) north of Sacramento, near the city of Oroville in Butte County. It sent up a huge plume of smoke that could be seen from space as it grew to more than 5.5 square miles (14 square kilometers). There was no containment.

But Oroville Mayor David Pittman said by Wednesday afternoon there had been a "significant drop in the fire activity," and he was hopeful that some residents could soon be allowed to return home. The fire's progress was stopped along the southern edge and firefighters working in steep terrain were trying to build containment lines on the northern side.

"On that north side they have some real struggles in terms of the topography," Pittman said.

Meanwhile another fire broke out Wednesday afternoon about 5 miles (8 kilometers) south of Oroville, prompting new evacuations near the town of Palermo. That blaze, dubbed the Grubbs Fire, also had no containment.

More than a dozen other blazes, most of them small, were active across the state, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire. A fire Wednesday afternoon briefly prompted evacuations in heavily populated Simi Valley, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

The state's largest blaze, the Basin Fire, covered nearly 22 square miles (57 square kilometers) of the Sierra National Forest in eastern Fresno County and was 26% contained.

In Oroville, a state of emergency was declared Tuesday night and evacuation centers were set up. The evacuation zone expanded Wednesday into foothills and rural areas beyond the city that's home to about 20,000 people. With July Fourth in mind, authorities also warned that fireworks are banned in many places, including most of Butte County.

There was no immediate official report on property losses. An Associated Press photographer saw fire burn three adjacent suburban-style homes in Oroville.

The fire ignited sprigs of grass poking from the concrete edges of Lake Oroville as gusty winds whipped up American flags lining a bend of the state's second largest reservoir and the nation's tallest dam.

World

Israeli strike kills yet another senior Hezbollah commander

BEIRUT (AP)—An Israeli strike in southern Lebanon on Wednesday killed a senior Hezbollah commander as tensions between the two sides continue to boil, a Hezbollah official told The Associated Press.

The strike near the southern coastal city of Tyre took place as global diplomatic efforts have intensified in recent weeks to prevent escalating clashes between Hezbollah and the Israeli military from spiraling into an all-out war that could possibly lead to a direct confrontation between Israel and Iran.

A Hezbollah statement identified the killed commander as Mohammad Naameh Nasser, who went by the name "Abu Naameh," his nom de guerre. A Hezbollah official speaking anonymously in line with regulations, said he was head of the group's Aziz Unit, one of three regional divisions in southern Lebanon.

Nasser is the most senior official from the Iran-backed group killed since Taleb Sami Abdullah, who was killed in an airstrike June 11. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in a speech honoring Abdullah said he played a pivotal role on the front line since clashes began on Oct. 8 leading the Nasr Unit.

Hezbollah said in response to the killing of Nasser, it launched Falaq rockets with heavy warheads targeting the headquarters of the Israeli military's 769th Brigade in Kiryat Shmona, as well as 100 salvos of Katyusha rockets targeting the headquarters of Israel's 210th division and the Kilaa air base in the Israeli-occupied Syrian Golan Heights.

AP

This picture released by Hezbollah media relations office, shows a portrait of Hezbollah commander Mohammad Naameh Nasser, who was killed by an Israeli airstrike that hit his car, in the southern costal town of Tyre, Lebanon, Wednesday, July 3, 2024.

The group also shared footage of Nasser taking part in what they said was an operation at an Israeli military outpost in southern Lebanon in 1999 back when it was under occupation.

In a video circulated by local media, residents rushed toward a charred vehicle with a large plume of smoke. Civil Defense said its first responders transported an unnamed wounded person to a hospital.

The Israeli military acknowledged the attack, saying that Nasser alongside Abdullah are "two of the most significant Hezbollah" militants in southern Lebanon. It said Nasser led attacks from southwestern Lebanon.

Hezbollah launched rockets on northern Israel a day after a Hamas surprise attack on southern Israel in October, leading to limited clashes along the tense border. The attacks have since gradually escalated, with Hezbollah introducing new weapons in their attacks and Israel striking deeper into Lebanon.

The group maintains that it will stop its attacks once there is a cease-fire in the Gaza Strip. Until then, it says it will continue with its attacks to pile pressure on Israel and the international community. Israeli officials have threatened to launch a larger military operation should Hezbollah not stop its attacks.

Hezbollah deputy leader Sheikh Naim Kassem told The Associated Press in an interview Monday that Israel cannot expect the group's attacks to remain limited should it launch a military operation within Lebanon, even if it aims to keep the conflict below the threshold of all-out war.

WORLD BRIEFS

Russian missiles and drones strike eastern Ukraine's Dnipro in a daylight attack that kills 5

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—A Russian missile and drone attack on the eastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro on Wednesday killed five civilians and injured 47 others, including a 14-year-old girl, authorities said. Blasts blew out some windows of a shopping mall, raining shards onto the street, photos published by local officials showed. Mayor Borys Filatov said the daytime attack also shattered windows in two schools and three kindergartens. Debris struck the intensive care unit of a children's hospital, and a fire broke out in another hospital. A video posted on social media by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy showed a missile with a fiery trail streaking over buildings in Ukraine's fourth-largest city, and debris flying into the air from its impact. The war, now in its third year since Russia invaded its neighbor, has killed more than 10,000 civilians and wounded around 20,000 others, the United Nations says.

Hurricane Beryl roars by Jamaica after killing at least 7 people in the southeast Caribbean

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)—Hurricane Beryl was roaring by Jamaica Wednesday, bringing fierce winds and heavy rain after the powerful Category 4 storm earlier killed at least seven people and caused significant damage in the southeast Caribbean. The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Beryl's eyewall was "brushing the south coast of Jamaica." Wind-whipped rain pounded the island for hours as residents heeded authorities' call to shelter until the storm had passed. Power was knocked out in much of the capital. Prime Minister Andrew Holness said on Wednesday afternoon that nearly 500 people were placed in shelters. By evening, he said that Jamaica has not seen the "worst of what could possibly happen." "We can do as much as we can do, as humanly possible, and we leave the rest in the hands of God," Holness said. Several roadways in the country's interior settlements were impacted by fallen trees and utility poles, while some communities in the northern section were without electricity, according to the government's information service.

Life & Style

Usher, Janet Jackson headline 30th Essence Festival of Culture

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—The best of Black culture's policymakers, thought leaders, creatives, spiritual gurus, business movers and shakers, health experts and, of course, musical talent are poised to converge in New Orleans over the Fourth of July weekend as part of the Essence Festival of Culture.

The festival kicks off Thursday and runs through Sunday. This year, it celebrates 30 years of entertainment, networking and thought-provoking conversations to inspire solutions for issues facing urban communities. The underlying premise remains the same: purposeful partying.

Vice President Kamala Harris is scheduled to hold a conversation with Essence CEO Caroline Wanga during the Global Black Economic Forum on Saturday at the festival. The visit comes amid calls by some for the replacement of President Joe Biden on the Democratic presidential ticket following his debate with former President Donald Trump. Those types of in-depth dialogues, covering a wide-range of topics, can be expected throughout the event.

"This experience was built to celebrate 25 years of Essence magazine, Black womanhood," said Hakeem Holmes, vice president for the Essence Festival of Culture. "Black women built this festival, Black women poured into this festival. They had a good time at this festival, made relationships and networked—all at this festival—and then they brought what they learned home with them."

AP

Janet Jackson performs at the Essence Festival in New Orleans, July 8, 2018.

Since its beginning, the festival has morphed into a multi-generational event that seeks to touch the entire Black family, by offering "a little bit of everything for everyone," Holmes said.

Much of that transition, Holmes said, is thanks to the city that's hosted the event every year except one. In 2006, Houston hosted the festival, while New Orleans dealt with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Lisa Alexis, director of Mayor Latoya Cantrell's Office of Cultural Economy, said 30 years of Essence has had a $327 million impact on the city.

"It started as a party with a purpose, but over the years they've expounded on that," Alexis said. "We now have the Black Global Economic Forum, the film festival, a wellness area, a marketplace. Our businesses have the opportunity through this partnership to be a part of the vendor market, and we're able to share and support one another as our cultural entrepreneurs look to grow."

That kind of paying it forward is what helps keep the festival relevant, Holmes said.

"Relevancy is driven by our relationship to this community," said Holmes, a New Orleans native. "We are constantly listening. … We have what folks want to see throughout this event. We have people who are coming to have conversations about things they can actionably take as next steps when they return home. And, we have the parties, too!"

New Mexico denies film incentive application on 'Rust' movie

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP)—Producers of the western movie "Rust" may have to forgo a robust economic incentive as they try to sell the film to distributors and fulfill financial obligations to the immediate family of a cinematographer who was fatally shot by Alec Baldwin during rehearsal in 2021.

New Mexico tax authorities denied an application this spring by Rust Movie Productions for incentives worth as much as $1.6 million, according to documents obtained by The Associated Press. A late July deadline for producers to appeal the decision is approaching.

Meanwhile, Baldwin is scheduled to go on trial starting next week on an involuntary manslaughter charge in Halyna Hutchins' death. The lead actor and co-producer of "Rust" was pointing a gun at Hutchins when it went off, killing her and wounding director Joel Souza.

Melina Spadone, an attorney representing the production company, said the film production tax incentive was going to be used to finance a legal settlement between producers and Hutchins' widower and son.

"The denial of the tax credit has disrupted those financial arrangements," said Spadone, a New York- and Los Angeles-based senior counsel at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman. She helped broker the 2022 settlement that rebooted the stalled production of "Rust" in Montana with some of the original cast and crew, including Baldwin and Souza. Filming wrapped up last year.

Terms of the settlement are confidential, but producers say finishing the film was meant to honor Hutchins' artistic vision and generate money for her young son.

Court documents indicate that settlement payments are up to a year late, as attorneys for Hutchins' widower determine "next steps" that include whether to resume wrongful death litigation or initiate new claims. Legal representatives for Matthew Hutchins did not respond to telephone and email messages seeking comment.

The prosecution of Baldwin and the film's tax incentive application both have financial implications for New Mexico taxpayers. The Santa Fe district attorney's office says it spent $625,000 on "Rust"-related prosecution through the end of April.

The state's film incentives program is among the most generous in the nation, offering a direct rebate of between 25% and 40% on an array of expenditures to entice movie projects, employment and infrastructure investments. As a percentage of the state budget, only Georgia pays out more in incentives.

It includes a one-time option to assign the payment to a financial institution. That lets producers use the rebate to underwrite production ahead of time, often layering rights to the rebate and future movie income into production loans.

Among the beneficiaries of the rebate program are the 2011 movie "Cowboys and Aliens" and the TV series "Better Call Saul," a spinoff of "Breaking Bad." As for current productions, New Mexico is the backdrop for a new film starring Matthew McConaughey and America Ferrera about the rescue of students in a 2018 wildfire in the town of Paradise—the most destructive in California's history.

Charlie Moore, a spokesperson for the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, declined to comment specifically on the "Rust" application, citing concerns about confidential taxpayer information. Applications are reviewed for a long list of accounting and claim requirements.

Online acquaintance asks for a closer relationship

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 70-year-old Black woman who looks about 45 or 50. I recently met a man online while playing dominoes. We have been chatting back and forth for about two weeks now. He is 44, is of German descent and has a 9-year-old son. The problem is, he wants to have a relationship with me.

I have told him I'm 26 years older than he is, my children are older than him and I have great-grandchildren his son's age. He says none of this matters to him. We have never met in person, but he has invited me to come to Texas. What else can I say to persuade him that this cannot work?

OUT OF THE QUESTION IN VIRGINIA

DEAR OUT: My goodness, you certainly are getting the bum's rush. Please take some time and get to know this person better. If you are still corresponding in, say, six months, a way to demonstrate the difference in your ages would be to accept his gracious invitation to visit, and bring along one of your children.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are retired and have recently joined a Harley Davidson motorcycle club. We both love to ride and are looking forward to many events in the coming months. At the first meeting we attended, an ex-lover of mine was seated at the same table near my husband. They seemed to enjoy conversing back and forth. I kept a low profile and tried to ignore the situation.

I know that at the meetings and upcoming events, we are sure to see each other. Should I tell my husband who this person is? I am concerned it will spoil those events for us and cause issues if I reveal it. My husband has, for years, taken meds for anxiety and depression. We are very happy together, and I love him very much.

LET'S RIDE IN THE SOUTH

DEAR LET'S RIDE: Very few people today don't have some kind of history. Tell your husband the truth. Believe me, he is sure to be even more anxious and depressed if the situation is revealed before you can tell him.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: An old hat style that created problems years ago has returned. The brim is so large that a person sitting behind them in church can see nothing but the back of that hat. It's aggravating to think I had a good place to sit and then have to spend an hour seeing only that big hat.

To block the view of those seated behind you is inconsiderate. I hope you will mention this in your column so women will be reminded how those large brims present a problem in any gathering where people are expected to sit quietly and listen to a speech or sermon.

I move when I can, but that isn't always possible, especially when the hat suddenly "appears" right before the service starts and finding another place to sit isn't feasible.

BLOCKED IN ALABAMA

DEAR BLOCKED: Your point is well taken. I'm pleased to pass your reminder along to those who need to see it, but since we cannot control the behavior of others, you would be well advised to run for the first row when you have a chance.

■■■

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY
BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

OK, NEXT WE'LL RACE TO THAT TREE OVER THERE.
THIS RACE WILL DETERMINE THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE UNIVERSE.
OH... WAIT. HOW LONG HAVE WE BEEN OUT HERE?
I DUNNO. AN HOUR MAYBE.
REALLY? GEEZ, WHERE DOES THE TIME GO?! HANG ON, I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
I'M NOT HAVING FUN!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

A MAN CAN'T HAVE TOO MANY GLOW-IN-THE-DARK BOW TIES!
YES, HE CAN
THEN, HOW MANY CAN HE HAVE?
IS ZERO A NUMBER?
IN THE CASE OF GLOW-IN-THE-DARK BOW TIES, YES
JIM DAVIS 7-5

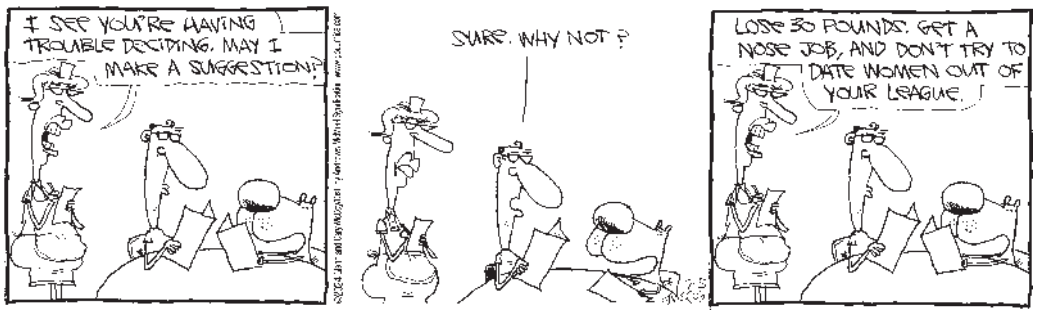
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I ONLY HAVE A COUPLE OF NO-COFFEE DAYS TO GO.
YOU GO, DAD.
I JUST WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE TO KEEP ME AWAKE.
I COULD SET FIRECRACKERS OFF BEHIND YOU EVERY COUPLE MINUTES.
YEAH, NO. SOMETHING LESS HEART-ATTACKY.
SO, THE CYMBALS ARE OUT, TOO.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


I SEE YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE DECIDING. MAY I MAKE A SUGGESTION?
SURE. WHY NOT?
LOSE 30 POUNDS. GET A NOSE JOB, AND DON'T TRY TO DATE WOMEN OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

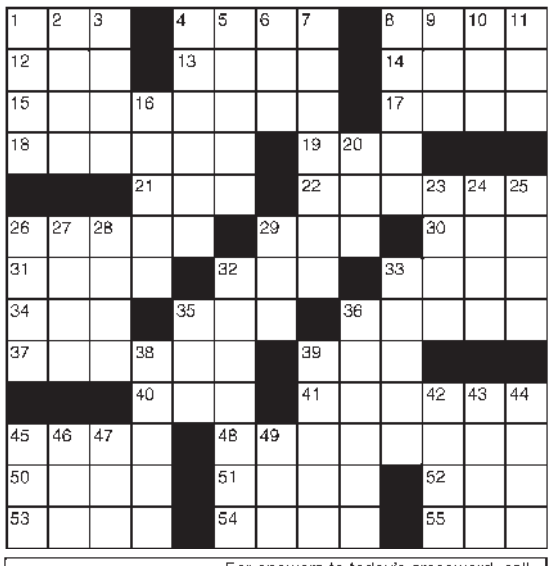
ACROSS
1 Sit-up targets
4 Power tool brand
8 Stadium event
12 Grazing land
13 Half (Pref.)
14 "Zounds!"
15 Turncoat's action
17 Reporter's quest
18 TV detective Remington
19 Wall St. debut
21 Honorary legal deg.
22 Rio setting, to natives
26 Actress Marisa
29 Charge
30 Brit. record label
31 Slightly
32 Diner order
33 Intend
34 Bamboozle
35 "Psst!"
36 Fate
37 Service for a social
39 Gearwheel tooth
40 Green shade
41 Highly decorated
45 Green shade
48 Wager
50 Humorist Lebowitz
51 Operatic solo
52 Abbr. in an email
53 Superman's alias
54 Marvel superheroes
55 Bat wood

DOWN
1 Priestly vestments
2 Borscht base
3 Fill fully
4 "Want me to proceed?"
5 — up (excited)
6 "— Little Teapot"
7 Nickname of Elizabeth II
8 Salami choice
9 Census stat
10 Gullet
11 Bradley and Asner
16 Lease anew
20 Season opener?
23 Crystal gazer
24 Mosque leader
25 Director Wertmuller
26 Diplomacy
27 Reed instrument
28 "Dracula" heroine
29 Aviate
32 Old video recording format
33 — Carta
35 Haw preceder
36 Seoul man
38 Shelled out
39 TV journalist Roberts
42 "Waterloo" group
43 Sleuths
44 Leave an impression?
45 NYC airport
46 Exist
47 Author Brown
49 Pitcher's pride

Solution time: 25 mins.

C	L	A	M	■	L	A	I	R	■	S	A	G
O	I	S	E	■	E	D	G	E	■	A	V	I
M	A	H	A	R	A	J	A	H	■	V	F	G
P	R	E	N	U	P	■	■	A	B	A	C	I
■	■	■	I	Í	■	G	A	B	O	N	■	■
R	A	C	F	■	A	R	R	■	A	N	N	F
A	T	H	■	■	I	O	R	■	■	A	D	S
F	L	U	X	■	O	W	E	■	S	H	A	Q
■	■	T	Y	K	E	S	■	M	E	■	■	■
D	I	Z	Z	Y	■	■	S	A	N	E	S	T
L	O	P	■	C	O	H	A	N	D	A	A	H
I	N	A	■	I	R	O	I	■	E	S	I	A
I	S	H	■	C	G	E	E	■	R	E	S	I

Yesterday's answer 7-5



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Megan Rapinoe, 39; Dave Haywood, 42; Edie Falco, 61; Huey Lewis, 74.

Happy Birthday: Use your attributes wisely. Trust and believe in your ability to add unique appeal to whatever you choose to pursue. Hard work and discipline will catapult you forward and open doors to new and exciting opportunities. Change may not be your thing, but take a chance; you'll discover a wonderful world awaits you. Don't let regret set in because you are afraid to embrace change. Your numbers are 6, 14, 22, 24, 30, 38, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Speak up if you want something. Stand up to anyone using manipulative tactics to push you in a direction that doesn't suit your needs. Walk alone if it helps get you to a place that offers peace of mind, comfort and opportunities to follow your heart and dreams. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* A plan with high energy and drive to reach your target will encourage prosperous results. Invest more thought into where and how you live, and cut corners to make room for the pursuits you want to aspire to. Don't let outside influences stifle your plans. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Think big, but before you start your objective, simplify, define and budget to fit your lifestyle. Refrain from letting the changes others make disrupt your plans. An unusual encounter will offer alternatives that will encourage you to broaden your awareness and restructure your plans. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Moderate your emotions and channel your energy into something that matters to you. Take the initiative and act. A cheerful but willful display will bring opportunity and change, injecting hope and satisfaction into your life. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Stand firm and use colorful lingo that will help sell your ideas to those you need on board to enter a new phase in your life. Listen to the input you receive, and compromise where necessary, and you will gain ground. A change will come quicker than expected. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Surround yourself with the people you can count on for backup. A change of plans will spark you to act quickly. Take the podium and make your voice heard. The response you receive will help you reach your objective. Love and romance, along with physical improvements, are favored. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Use your command of language to persuade anyone sitting on the fence. Expect and prepare for opposition, and you'll navigate the ups and downs of getting your way. Opportunity knocks; keep it from getting away due to passive behavior on your part. Make your objective clear. ✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Size up your situation and recognize who is with you before you make a move. Having a clear picture and educating yourself to counter any negativity you face will help bring about the changes necessary to improve your financial and emotional well-being. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Confusion will lead to chaos. Get your facts straight and a solid plan in place. Opportunity is apparent, but your timing and precision will require fine-tuning if you want to take advantage of a situation that can improve your life financially, emotionally and physically. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Keep an open mind, participate and take what you want. Position yourself for success and happiness with a positive attitude, astute comprehension of the possibilities and the willpower to direct yourself accordingly to reach your goal. Socializing and flirting will promote romance. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Be ready to change direction or plan to take advantage of an opportunity. A favorable domestic situation will give you leeway and comfort, knowing you can change your life positively. Barter on your behalf and you'll get your way. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Ask questions and get the lowdown before you act. Keeping situations simple will help you avoid situations that can backfire or cost you emotionally, physically or financially. Discipline and ingenuity will be necessary to maintain your status quo. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, caring and generous. You are helpful and energetic.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	7	5		4	2		1	
1	4	8						
			9			5		
			8		5			9
		6	7		3	4	2	
						8	3	
3		4		7			5	
		7						
	9			3	4			2

Difficulty: ★★★★ 7/5

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

9	8	6	1	3	4	7	2	5
4	5	7	6	2	8	3	9	1
2	1	3	9	7	5	6	4	8
7	2	8	3	4	6	1	5	9
6	4	5	8	1	9	2	3	7
1	3	9	2	5	7	8	6	4
3	9	4	7	6	1	5	8	2
8	7	2	5	9	3	4	1	6
5	6	1	4	8	2	9	7	3

Difficulty: ★★★ 7/4

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

'PRISCILLA' (FILM) **Solution: 9 letters**

N	Y	G	I	L	E	I	M	O	Z	N	E	R	O	L
N	E	M	D	N	A	S	I	V	L	E	C	T	R	E
A	L	E	N	R	I	E	B	N	A	D	I	R	Y	G
A	S	I	S	M	E	M	P	H	I	S	N	U	E	E
L	E	R	R	N	A	L	A	L	O	O	E	E	L	N
O	R	A	A	L	U	A	Y	P	M	D	V	S	N	D
P	P	M	E	O	C	N	S	R	A	Ⓔ	E	T	E	S
P	A	A	G	V	N	E	A	T	L	Ⓜ	M	O	H	E
O	R	S	O	E	E	H	E	A	A	Ⓐ	L	R	E	G
C	E	I	H	O	A	M	A	R	D	Ⓕ	I	Y	E	A
A	N	L	J	R	E	G	D	O	D	N	F	D	R	I
I	T	I	D	R	O	L	E	B	O	C	A	J	U	R
F	S	N	B	E	A	U	L	I	E	U	K	C	O	R
O	A	C	A	I	L	E	E	S	P	A	E	N	Y	A
S	T	E	P	M	O	T	H	E	R	I	O	M	E	M

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Alan, Ann, Beaulieu, Cailee Spaeny, Dan Beirne, Date, Dodger, Drama, Elvis and Me, Fame, Film, Hog Ears, Jacob Elordi, Joe Esposito, Legends, Lisa Marie, Lorenzo Mieli, Love, Lynne, Marriage, Memoir, Memphis, Parents, Presley, Rock, Sandra Harmon, Sofia Coppola, Staff, Stepmother, True Story, Unseen, Venice, Youree Henley

Yesterday's Answer: Backyard

The NEW **TELEWORD VINTAGE COLLECTION EDITION #1** can be purchased on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

LeBron agrees to 2-year extension with Lakers, AP source says

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

LeBron James is making it official: He's coming back for a record-tying 22nd season in the NBA, one where the league's all-time scoring leader could share the floor with his son Bronny as teammates with the Los Angeles Lakers.

James has agreed to a two-year contract to remain with the Lakers, a person with knowledge of the negotiations said Wednesday. The second year of the deal is at James' option and means he could become a free agent again next summer, said the person, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the agreement had not been announced publicly.

ESPN reported that the Lakers and James' agent, Klutch Sports CEO Rich Paul, may agree on a salary slightly less than the max that James could have gotten—a move that could keep the team from reaching the second apron and preserve some roster flexibility going forward.

Either way, the expectation is that James will make around $50 million—give or take a little bit—this coming season, pushing his career on-court earnings to around $530 million and making him the first player in NBA history to eclipse the $500 million mark.

It will be James' 22nd season in the NBA, tying Vince Carter for the league record. The Lakers selected Bronny James last week in the second round of the draft, putting them in position to have the first on-court father-son duo in NBA history.

Bronny James already has signed his first NBA contract, the Lakers announced Wednesday. It is a four-year deal, the last of those years at the Lakers' option, worth $7.9 million—with about $1.2 million as his rookie year salary.

Getting his latest deal done clears one logistical hurdle for LeBron James: He needed a contract to be in place before he could take the floor with USA Basketball for the start of its training camp in Las Vegas this weekend, one where the squad will start preparations for the Paris Olympics. James will play in the Olympics for the fourth time, his first since helping the U.S. win gold at the 2012 London Games.

He'll turn 40 in December and averaged 25.7 points, 7.3 rebounds and 8.3 assists last season—as the oldest active player in the league.

Not only is James the all-time leader in points (40,474), but he's fourth in assists (11,009), sixth in games played (1,492) and eighth in both 3-pointers made (2,410) and steals (2,275).

His 20 All-Star selections is a record, as are his 20 appearances on the All-NBA team. He holds the records for being both the youngest player, and oldest player, to make an All-NBA squad.

James became the youngest to make All-NBA when he was voted onto the team for the 2004-05 season. This past season, he became the first player to be age 39 or older in what became an All-NBA campaign.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Tim Duncan were both just a few days from turning 39 when the regular seasons ended in what became their final All-NBA campaigns, Abdul-Jabbar's being 1985-86 and Duncan's being 2014-15. James played in 71 games this past season, the last 42 of those coming after he turned 39.

AP

Los Angeles Lakers draft pick Bronny James, left, and his father, LeBron James, share a light moment as they arrive for the NBA basketball team's news conference in El Segundo, Calif., Tuesday, July 2, 2024.

Coco Gauff and Carlos Alcaraz advance at Wimbledon

LONDON (AP)—Coco Gauff likes No. 1 Court at Wimbledon.

It's where she beat Venus Williams back in 2019 when Gauff made her Wimbledon debut at age 15.

On Wednesday, Gauff beat qualifier Anca Todoni 6-2, 6-1 to advance to the third round at the All England Club.

"This is the court where I first started here at Wimbledon. Court 1 is always a special place for me to play on," the 20-year-old Gauff said in her on-court interview.

The victory also allows Gauff, the No. 2 seed, to move another step away from last year's first-round exit.

"Overall, I just learned about life a lot," the U.S. Open champion said when asked about putting that three-set loss to Sofia Kenin behind her.

"I just realized that, yes, what I do I'm very passionate about, but it's not ever that serious and sometimes the world can make you feel like there's so much pressure, there's so much expectation," she said. "At the end of the (day), it's a game. It's sport."

The 19-year-old Todoni is from Romania and was making her Grand Slam debut.

"I do think I could have played cleaner at some moments," Gauff said.

Five years ago, Gauff beat Williams —a five-time Wimbledon champion—6-4, 6-4 in the first round and eventually reached the last 16, all in her Grand Slam debut.

Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz trailed 6-5 in the first set Wednesday before coming back to beat Aleksander Vukic 7-6 (5), 6-2, 6-2, setting up a third-round meeting with No. 29 Frances Tiafoe after the American eliminated Borna Coric 7-6 (5), 6-1, 6-3.

When told by the on-court interviewer that Tiafoe said he's "coming after you," the 21-year-old Spaniard replied with a smile: "I'm going for him."

"We played a really good match in the U.S. Open," the No. 3 seed said of their 2022 semifinal that Alcaraz won at Flushing Meadows.

In other results, four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka was eliminated in the second round by No. 19 Emma Navarro by a score of 6-4, 6-1, while No. 1 Jannik Sinner got past 2021 runner-up Matteo Berrettini 7-6 (3), 7-6 (4), 2-6, 7-6 (4) at Centre Court in an all-Italian contest.

"I knew that I had to raise my level today," Sinner said. "He is a grass-court specialist. ... I'm very happy how I handled the situation."

No. 11 Danielle Collins completed her first-round match—a 6-3, 7-6 (4) win over Clara Tauson. It had been suspended Tuesday night at 4-4 in the second set.

No. 20 Beatriz Haddad Maia advanced to the third round by beating Magdalena Frech 7-5, 6-3.

Banned NBA player Jontay Porter will be charged in betting case, court papers indicate

NEW YORK (AP)—Former Toronto Raptors player Jontay Porter will be charged with a federal felony connected to the sports betting scandal that spurred the NBA to ban him for life, court papers indicate.

Federal prosecutors in Brooklyn filed what's known as a criminal information sheet on Tuesday. The document doesn't specify a court date or the charge or charges, but it does show the case is related to an existing prosecution of four men charged with scheming to cash in on tips from a player about his plans to exit two games early.

The Associated Press sent voice and email messages Wednesday to Porter's St. Louis-based lawyer, Jeff Jensen. He said last month that Porter had been "in over his head due to a gambling addiction" but was getting treatment and cooperating with law enforcement.

Brooklyn U.S. Attorney Breon Peace's office declined to comment on the new developments.

An NBA investigation found in April that Porter tipped off bettors about his health and then claimed illness to exit at least one game, creating wins for anyone who'd bet on him to underperform expectations. Porter also gambled on NBA games in which he didn't play, once betting against his own team, the league said.

The four men charged last month appeared in court but haven't yet entered pleas. They're charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and were released on bonds in various amounts.

A court complaint against those four — Ammar Awawdeh, Timothy McCormack, Mahmud Mollah and Long Phi Pham—accused them of using prior knowledge of an NBA player's plans so that they or their relatives could place winning bets on his performance.

The complaint, filed in early June, identified the athlete only as "Player 1." Details about him and the game—and a quote from an NBA news release — matched up with the league's probe into Porter.

According to the complaint, the player owed "significant gambling debts" to Awawdeh, who encouraged the athlete to settle them with a "special": intentionally exiting games so that bettors in the know could successfully wager on him falling short of what sportsbooks figured he'd do.

"If I don't do a special with your terms. Then it's up," the player responded in an encrypted message early this year, according to the complaint. "And u hate me and if I don't get u 8k by Friday you're coming to Toronto to beat me up."

The player told some of the four already-charged defendants that he would claim health problems to take himself out of games early on Jan. 26 and March 20, the complaint says.

Porter played only briefly on those dates before leaving the court, complaining of injury or illness. In both games, his points, rebounds and assists were below the betting line for his performance.

Mollah, McCormack and a relative of Awawdeh had bet the "under" and made out, though a betting company ultimately stopped Mollah from collecting most of his more than $1 million in winnings on the March 20 game, according to the complaint.

After the NBA and others began investigating, the player messaged Pham, Mollah and Awawdeh in early April that they "might just get hit w a rico"—an apparent reference to the common acronym for a federal racketeering charge—and asked whether they had deleted "all the stuff" from their phones, the complaint notes.

The complaint said the player had spoken with authorities in hopes of earning "leniency at sentencing in the event he is criminally charged," but it didn't say when the conversation or conversations occurred.

Porter's salary for this year was around $410,000. The 24-year-old averaged 4.4 points, 3.2 rebounds and 2.3 assists in 26 games this season, including five starts. He also played in 11 games for the Memphis Grizzlies in the 2020-21 season.

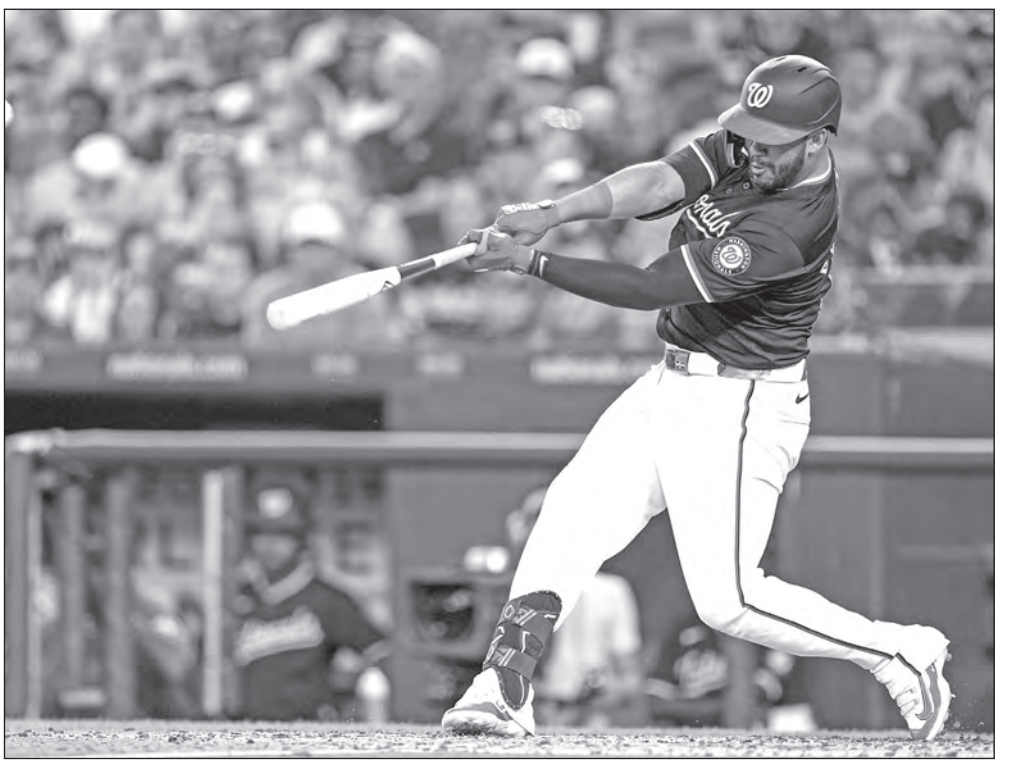
Wood drives in go-ahead run, Garcia homers as Nats beat Mets

WASHINGTON (AP)—James Wood singled home the go-ahead run in his third major league game, Luis García Jr. hit two homers and the Washington Nationals rallied to beat the New York Mets 7-5 on Wednesday night.

Wood, Washington's top prospect who made his debut this week, drove in Lane Thomas with a hit off Jake Diekman in the seventh, then stole his first career base moments later. He also singled and scored in the sixth, part of the Nationals' comeback from a five-run deficit.

Jacob Barnes (4-2) threw a perfect seventh in relief of Mitchell Parker to get the victory as the Nationals ended a three-game skid and won for just the second time in their last nine. The Mets fell back to .500.

The Mets' beleaguered, overtaxed bullpen finally cost them after doing enough to string together consecutive 10-inning wins. Diekman (2-3) allowed two runs on two hits, getting just one out.



AP

Washington Nationals' Luis García Jr. hits a three-run homer during the sixth inning of a baseball game against the New York Mets at Nationals Park, Wednesday, July 3, 2024, in Washington.

WHITE SOX 8, GUARDIANS 2

CLEVELAND (AP)—Erick Fedde gave up one run in six innings, Martin Maldonado homered and drove in three runs, and the Chicago White Sox routed AL Central-leading Cleveland.

Fedde (6-3) retired the final 12 batters he faced, allowing three hits with three strikeouts.

Lenyn Sosa matched his career-high with three hits and Luis Robert Jr. had a pair of hits and scored twice for the White Sox, who have the worst record in the majors at 25-63.

Guardians starter Gavin Williams (0-1) went four innings and 74 pitches in his season debut after missing three months with right elbow inflammation. He gave up five runs and seven hits in his first major league appearance since Sept. 17 against Texas.

Brayan Rocchio hit a solo homer for Cleveland, which had won six straight at Progressive Field snapped and still has the best home record in the majors at 27-10.

RED SOX 7, MARLINS 2

MIAMI (AP)—Ceddanne Rafaela tripled, doubled and drove in three runs, Brayan Bello limited Miami to a run over 6 2/3 innings and Boston beat the Marlins.

Rafael Devers and Masataka Yoshida each had two hits and two RBIs to help the Red Sox win their third straight after a three-game slide.

In his first start since June 25, Bello (8-5) gave up seven hits, walked one and struck out seven. The right-hander's previous turn was skipped to help him overcome a difficult stretch, when he dropped three of four decisions.

Red Sox center fielder Jarren Duran and left fielder Rob Refsnyder robbed Miami's Josh Bell of extra base hits with standout defensive plays. Duran ran and tracked down Bell's drive at the wall in the sixth, and O'Neill dove to catch a line drive in the eighth.

REDS 3, YANKEES 2

NEW YORK (AP)—Andrew Abbott took a two-hit shutout into the seventh inning and reliever Fernando Cruz got Aaron Judge to ground into a pivotal double play, pitching Cincinnati past the struggling New York Yankees.

Noelvi Marte hit a two-run homer and Stuart Fairchild also connected for the Reds, who handed Carlos Rodón (9-6) his fourth straight loss. They've won consecutive one-run games at Yankee Stadium to ensure their first series victory since June 6-9.

Cincinnati was 0-4-2 in its previous six series since taking three of four games from the Chicago Cubs.

Anthony Volpe ended an 0-for-18 slump with a two-run double in the seventh off Cruz, who then threw a wild pitch and walked Juan Soto that put runners at the corners in a 3-2 game.

ASTROS 9, BLUE JAYS 2

TORONTO (AP)—Jose Altuve hit a tiebreaking single in a four-run seventh inning, Yordan Alvarez homered for the third straight game and Houston beat Toronto for their 11th win in 13 games.

Houston's Yainer Diaz reached base four times and drove in three as the Astros handed the struggling Blue Jays their 11th loss in 15.

Alvarez looked to be in pain after an awkward swing on his ground ball to second base that ended the first inning, but Houston's designated hitter reached base in his next four plate appearances.

Alvarez doubled home a run in the third, led off the sixth with a solo homer, came around to score after being intentionally walked in the seventh, and capped his night with an RBI double in the eighth. He finished 3 for 4 with three RBIs.

PIRATES 5, CARDINALS 4, 10 INNINGS

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Bryan Reynolds and Oneil Cruz hit run-scoring singles on consecutive pitches in the 10th inning, and Pittsburgh rallied to beat St. Louis.

Willson Contreras' two-run homer in the eighth off Colin Holderman tied the score 3-3.

Alec Burleson' put St. Louis ahead with a 10th-inning sacrifice fly off Aroldis Chapman (1-3) after Masyn Winn's infield single advanced automatic runner Dylan Carlson to third.

With Joey Bart the automatic runner on second starting the bottom half, Michael A. Taylor struck out while trying to bunt and Andrew McCutchen drew a walk from Andrew Kittridge (1-4).

JoJo Romero relieved and Reynolds lined a fastball into center to drive in Bart and advance McCutchen to second. Cruz drove a slider to right and McCutchen scored standing up as the ball bounced to the right-field wall.

BRAVES 3, GIANTS 1

ATLANTA (AP)—Chris Sale allowed only three hits in six innings to earn his 11th win, leading Atlanta to a victory over San Francisco.

Sale (11-3) tied Kansas City's Seth Lugo for the most wins in the majors. It is Sale's most wins since finishing 12-4 in 2018 with the Boston Red Sox. Sale recorded nine strikeouts while allowing one run.

The Giants were held to four hits off Sale and three relievers.

Austin Riley hit a two-run double in the fifth.

ROYALS 4, RAYS 2

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Michael Wacha allowed one run on two hits over six innings, Salvador Perez drove in a pair of runs and Kansas City got a spectacular defensive play from Kyle Isbel in the ninth to beat Tampa Bay.

After reliever Chris Stratton gave up a run in the eighth, Royals closer James McArthur got Jose Siri to fly out to right and Richie Palacios to pop foul and leave runners on second and third.

McArthur came back for the ninth and gave up a leadoff single to Ben Rortvedt, but then struck out Yandy Diaz and watched Isbel rob Taylor Walls of extra bases with a leaping catch at the wall in center. McArthur then got Isaac Paredes to ground back to the pitcher to finish off his 15th save.

TIGERS 9, TWINS 2

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Carson Kelly hit a grand slam and Wenceel Pérez followed with a home run to back Keider Montero's first major league win as Detroit beat Minnesota.

Riley Greene and Matt Vierling hit two-run homers, and Greene, Colt Keith and Akil Baddoo tripled for the Tigers, who had lost five of six.

Kelly's homer, his sixth of the season and fourth in 10 games, came on a 1-0 fastball from David Festa (1-1) in the third and put Detroit ahead 4-0. Kelly homered on the next pitch, a changeup.

Kelly entered hitting .300 with two doubles, a triple, four home runs and 15 RBIs in his previous 24 games.

PHILLIES 5, CUBS 3

CHICAGO (AP)—Edmundo Sosa broke a tie with a short sacrifice fly in the eighth, Whit Merrifield followed with an RBI single and Philadelphia topped the struggling Chicago Cubs.

Trea Turner easily scored from third on Sosa's 261-foot fly to put the Phillies ahead when rookie center fielder Pete Crow-Armstrong's throw was well up the first base line.

All-Star Alec Bohm hit his 11th home run, a two-run shot, and finished with two hits as the Phillies won their third straight. Philadelphia backup catcher Rafael Marchán hit a homer and doubled in his 12th game since being recalled from Triple-A Lehigh Valley on June 11 after three-time All-Star J.T. Realmuto was hurt.

PADRES 6, RANGERS 4

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—David Peralta hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the seventh inning for his first of the season in San Diego's victory over Texas.

The 427-foot drive into the Texas bullpen in right-center field helped give the Padres their 10th win in 13 games. San Diego ended the Rangers' three-game home shutout streak on Manny Machado's two-run shot in the third.

Jurickson Profar had two hits on the night he was named an All-Star for the first time as an NL starter. The nod came almost 12 years after Profar made his major league debut as a 19-year-old for the Rangers, with him in the city of his original team, and where the All-Star Game will be held July 16.

BREWERS 3, ROCKIES 0

DENVER (AP)—William Contreras and Brice Turang had three hits apiece, Christian Yelich hit his ninth home run of the season and Colin Rea pitched seven shutout innings to lift Milwaukee past Colorado.

The Brewers' win was their eighth in their past 10 games and extended their lead over the St. Louis Cardinals in the National League Central Division to seven games.

Rea (8-2) gave up six hits while striking out four and walking none to earn his fourth win in his past five starts.

ATHLETICS 5, ANGELS 0

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Joey Estes pitched Oakland's first individual shutout in more than three years and Oakland beat the Los Angeles Angels.

Estes (3-3) threw 68 of his 92 pitches for strikes, limiting Los Angeles to five singles and a walk with four strikeouts in the first complete game of his career. The right-hander induced three double plays and struck out Taylor Ward swinging to end the game.

It was the 16th complete game in the major leagues this season, 10 of them shutouts.

The last Oakland pitcher to accomplish the feat was Sean Manaea, who blanked the Mariners on June 2, 2021.

Brent Rooker had three hits including a homer and Max Schuemann also homered.

ORIOLES 4, MARINERS 1

SEATTLE (AP)—Ryan O'Hearn had a key two-out, two-run double and later added a solo home run, Dean Kremer threw five shutout innings in his first start since late May, and Baltimore beat Seattle.

Baltimore won for the sixth time in seven games and continued Seattle's recent side that has seen a 10-game lead in the AL West dwindle down to two. The Mariners lost for the 10th time in 13 games.

Craig Kimbrel pitched the ninth for his 21st save for Baltimore and 438th of his career moving him into fourth-place alone on the all-time saves list.

DIAMONDBACKS 12, DODGERS 4

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Christian Walker hit a go-ahead homer in the fourth inning and a three-run blast in the ninth—his 16th and 17th career shots at Dodger Stadium—and Arizona overcame a rough start to rout Los Angeles.

Gabriel Moreno and Lourdes Gurriel Jr. added two-run homers for Arizona, down 4-1 before Diamondbacks starter Cristian Mena retired a batter in his major league debut.

Freddie Freeman and Teoscar Hernández hit back-to-back homers in the first for the NL West-leading Dodgers. After four of their first five batters had hits, they had only two more the rest of the game. Arizona pounded out 16 hits.

Retardo revels in June tourney

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

William Retardo ruled the Fil-Taga Golfers Association's June tournament that was held in conjunction with the 3rd Annual Saipan Pacific Lions Club Golf Tournament last June 8 at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

The 56-year-old chef de cuisine at Pacific Islands Club Saipan fired a net score of 68. Retardo clubbed a gross score of 79 following a 38 in the front nine and a 41 in the back nine.

Rene Batallones came in second at two shots back at net 70 (82, 44-38), while Dan Ganacias was third his net 72 (84, 44-37).

"The course was perfect and the green felt faster than usual. As for the weather, it was nice. It wasn't too hot, and the wind wasn't too strong either," said Retardo.

He said each of his drives at the beginning of each hole felt great and that he was able to have a great iron game during the tournament.

"My best hole was No. 7. I was the nearest to the pin for that hole and I also used the wind to my advantage, which led me to a birdie. As for my worst hole, it would be hole No. 6. I had a really good drive, but my next swing was short and it sent my ball swimming. This gave me the only double bogey of the tournament."

He then dedicated his win to his family for supporting his golf hobby.

"It feels great, considering that I haven't played in the last two years. Special thanks to my *kumpaire*, playing partner, and very good friend Freddie Cataluna for encouraging me to go back to playing golf."

With the win, Retardo joins Tom Palikkun (January), Henry Bautista (February and March), and Antonio Bornilla (April and May) who have so far won the Fil-Taga Golfers Association monthly tournaments and qualified for the season-ending Ace of Aces tournament.

A total of 19 Fil-Taga members took part in the June tourney and they are the following with their net scores in parenthesis—Freddie Cataluna (74), Ruben Avendano (74), Edgar Abalos (74), Das Krishnan (75), Ronnie Santos (75), Albert Pajarillaga (76), Wil Maui (77), Adony Matutino (78), Jess Yumul (79), Antonio Tabornil (79), Romy Cayetano (80), Tom Palikkun (80), Tony Cabrera (83), Nino Rivera (91), Felix Ano (91), and Burt Suda (95).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

William Retardo topped the Fil-Taga Golfers Association's June tournament held last June 8 at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

Third Women's Class victory for Billie

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Billie Inabo Pangelinan, center, in action in the Women's Class of the June 2024 "MOTO IV" Points Race Series last Sunday at the Cowtown Race Park in Marpi.

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

Billie Inabo Pangelinan won her third Women's Class after topping the June 2024 "MOTO IV" Points Race Series last Sunday at the Cowtown Race Park in Marpi.

The 15-year-old Saipan Southern High School student vroomed her way to 50 points after topping both heats, while Mari Alvarez and Maribel Igitol came in second and third with 44 points and 40 points, respectively.

"The course was definitely dry and dusty as it was hot and sunny out. It wasn't anything different than any other day. It was all just luck! I would like to dedicate this win to my aunty, Marissa Rasa. I would like to thank my sponsors for this race—Inas Kitchen, YCO True Value Hardware, Rep. Manny Castro (Ind-Saipan), and my Ericco Racing Team," she said.

In the Power Puff Girls category of the Marianas Racing Association race, Miyako Celis topped the division last Sunday with 50 points, followed by Hitomo Sasamoto and Kesiil Camacho with 44 points and 40 points, respectively.

JODY

From page 20

The now 23-year-old actually spent her birthday traveling and now that she's back home, she said she decided to join the July 4th race for the first time as a kind of celebration. "I guess this could be the actual party and celebration for my birthday with a medal, so happy birthday to me!" said Tan.

"It was fun and that's all that matters," she added of the race. After her record-breaking stint in the 10th Micronesian Games last month, she said she actually hasn't run since then.

The turnout of 38 runners was a really great turnout, according to Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr.

"It's amazing because anytime you have a holiday race, it's really hard for people to wake up on a midweek day off and run a race at six in the morning, so I'm very happy with the results," he said.

This is the third time they've switched their course, as last year, they ran up north and back from the Garapan Fishing Base, while the original course in the first two races ran south and back from the Garapan Fishing Base.

With that, Dela Cruz said it's for the runners' safety due to the Beach Road construction. "We might just keep it here at Industrial Drive… People have fun having the road to themselves this early in the morning versus running on the sidewalk… This place is actually where they do the U.S. Army Reserve Fitness test course—the only difference is Run Saipan blessed it with a certified course."

He added that Run Saipan's goal is to certify their courses for the sake of sports tourism in the CNMI and bring in elite runners from around the world.

This race is sponsored by Latte Built and is a sanctioned race by Northern Marianas Athletics.

It was inspired by the U.S. Army Combat Physical Fitness Test, in which they do a 2-mile run among other workouts.

Dela Cruz then thanked Latte Built and owner Derek Cutting for their continued support and sponsorship, the race participants, IT&E's Rob Harrell, the Department of Public Safety, *Saipan Tribune*, and *Marianas Variety*.

LEIGH GASES

Participants of the 4th Annual 4th of July Independence Day 2-Mile Race pose for a group photo at the new course that starts at the Smiling Cove parking lot yesterday morning.

NETTERS

From page 20

from Fiji 8-10. Matt Zhu played in the No. 2 singles today and lost a close 5-7, 3-6 match to the second ranked Fiji 12's player," he said.

Head coach Jeff Race, in an interview yesterday about how the team was settling in, said that they had issues on their first night as the Airbnb that they booked turned out not to be available. Fortunately, they found another apartment.

"Our players are staying in three different locations so logistics are difficult. But we had two days and nights to recover from travel and we are having a pretty successful first day today (yesterday)," he said.

As for the courts and conditions, he said, "The courts here are not great but okay. Unfortunately, our 12s teams are competing about 20 miles away at the Nadi Sports Club. Colin Ramsey is there with the 12s and doing a great job."

When asked how he's feeling about the players; performance ahead of their first games, he said, "Of our Micro Games players Hoo Wang had a good performance today and appears to have improved her mental game in Majuro."

The tourney runs until Friday, July 12.

JAPAN

From page 20

laboring Nettasinghe trudged on in the second set. But with sheer willpower and some mistakes by Fujiwara, Nettasinghe managed to sneak his last few points in after Fujiwara created some unforced errors on his returns.

However, Fujiwara locked in after that and held down Nettasinghe, 21-16.

Then, just as the men's matchup finished, the women's singles between No. 1 Chinese Taipei's Hsiang Ti Lin and teammate Yu Wei Peng raged on in its final points.

Lin battled her way past the second set as Peng flirted with a rally and a tie-breaking third set, but Lin wrapped it up with consecutive points, 21-18. Lin won the first set, 21-14.

At press time, not all matches are finished.

In singles match results, women's No. 3 seed Kaoru Sugiyama bested Hsin-Pei Tsai, 21-16, 21-12; No. 5 seed Ching Ping Huang fell to unseeded Yue Yann Hooi, 18-21, 16-21; and No. 6 seed Akari Kurihara edged Siang Syuan Lin, 22-20, 21-7.

Unseeded Arena Samin won over No. 7 Riko Gunji via walkover; No. 8 Yu-Hsuan Lee lost to Mihane Endo, 10-21, 17-21; and No. 4 Asuka Takahashi fell to Sakura Masuki, 19-21, 18-21.

In the men's singles, No. 2 Kuan Lin Kuo dominated Kwang Hee Heo, 21-8, 21-12; No. 4 seed Ryoma Muramoto won over Chen Jia Chu, 21-15, 21-13; No. 5 seed Justin Hoh beat Ping-Hsien Huang, 21-15, 21-17; No. 7 Yu Huang battled it out against Saran Jamsri, 19-21, 21-19, 21-18; Cheng Kai blasted past Wongsup Wongsup-In 21-5, 21-17; and Cheng-Han Tsai edged Pyeong Gang Choi, 23-21, 21-11.

For Fujiwara, he said he decided to "attack aggressively" and when he won and upset the tourney's No. 1 seed, he was "relieved," In his next match, he said, "I plan to approach it with a confident attitude."

As for Hsiang Ti Lin, she said she didn't feel like she played her best despite her win. On how she pushed through and got the win anyhow, she said that being left-handed is an advantage as the angle of her returns is different than right-handed players. For her next match, she hopes she is able to believe in herself and do her best to win again.

LEIGH GASES

NMI's junior badminton player Lina Tsukagoshi during a practice session in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024—yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

NMI's junior badminton player Genelyn Lansangan during a practice session in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024— yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LeBron agrees to 2-year extension with Lakers, AP source says

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Retardo revels in June tourney

PAGE 19

Japan's Fujiwara upsets men's No. 1 seed

LEIGH GASES

Japan's Keisuke Fujiwara leaps for a smash during his game against No. 1 seed Viren Nettasinghe of Sri Lanka on Day 3 of the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024— yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

The women's singles No. 1 seed Chinese Taipei's Hsiang Ti Lin dives for a return during her second set matchup against teammate Yu Wei Peng in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024— yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

» Women's No. 1 advances

Japan's Keisuke Fujiwara yesterday upset men's No. 1 seed Viren Nettasinghe of Sri Lanka in the Round of 16 of the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024—yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Fujiwara controlled the points throughout the match as all the 21-year-old Nettasinghe could do was play catchup. The upset was palpable after the first set was taken by Fujiwara, 21-17.

The upset then became inevitable after a

See JAPAN on Page 19

Jody, Tania bursts into first place

LEIGH GASES

Chef Jody O'Sullivan raises his arms at the finish line after crossing first and setting a new course record with his time of 11:11 in the 4th Annual 4th of July Independence Day 2-Mile Race yesterday morning at the Smiling Cove parking lot.

By LEIGH GASES
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Chef Jody O'Sullivan and multi-awarded track star Tania Tan burst onto the scene of the new 4th Annual 4th of July Independence Day 2-Mile Race even before the start of Liberation Day festivities early yesterday morning.

The new course was from the Smiling Cove Marina parking lot to a little past the newly paved Industrial Road along the Gov. Eloy S. Inos Peace Park in Puerto Rico.

O'Sullivan got up and decided to set a new course record of 11:11 flat, even before the start of his work day. Second place was Heimanarii Lai San at 11:40, while 10th Micronesian Games silver medalist Simon Tang was just a few seconds behind at 11:47.

In the women's division, birthday girl Tan rushed into first place at 12:38. Second place was Krista Hawley at 16:00, and third was Leilani Ruszala with a time of 17:15.

O'Sullivan, who now works at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan after the permanent closure of Hyatt Regency Saipan, said that the race made him really tired. "Jordan [Ruiz] flew off and I was like well I better stay within touching distance of him. That was way too fast because I almost died in the corner there," he said.

Even with that, he was happy with the result. "It was a nice way to start the day," he said. O'Sullivan was also first in the Run from 2023 Mile Race last New Year's Eve, so he said he knew it was going to be downhill. However, "Coming back, it felt more downhill in December than it did this time. There's less wind this morning."

For Tan, who celebrated her birthday last July 1, she said it's her first time on island during the July 4th weekend since she was a child.

See JODY on Page 19

LEIGH GASES

Tania Tan smiles her way to the finish line of the 4th Annual 4th of July Independence Day 2-Mile Race yesterday morning at the Smiling Cove parking lot.

NMI junior netters notch wins in Fiji

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMI junior netters pose for a photo with head coach Jeff Race, far right, and assistant coach Colin Ramsey, back left, during the 2024 Pacific Oceania Junior Championship in Lautoka, Fiji that started yesterday.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

After the gold rush by the NMI National Tennis Team in the 10th Micronesian Games, junior netters are gearing up for another big stage—the 2024 Pacific Oceania Junior Championship in Lautoka, Fiji.

NMI junior netters stormed the courts on Day 1 yesterday, with wins in eight matches in the tournament that features other players from American Samoa, Vanuatu, Guam, Samoa, Tahiti, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Tuvalu, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

Hoo Wang—who bagged gold in the women's doubles with Isabel Heras and in the team matches during the Micro Games in the Marshall Islands just over a week ago—came into this tourney with momentum that propelled her to her first win.

She won over Solomon Islands' Margaret Agi Lewa in three sets, 4-6, 6-3, 10-4.

"My comeback tactic was just to have fun in the second set. I have learned a lot from the Micro Games to just have fun in my matches and to always stay positive. I'm very happy with my win and I'm looking forward to play some more good tennis in the following weeks," she said.

The next win for NMI was by Si Woo Lee—also a gold medalist in the Micro Games. He bested Bing Low from Fiji, 6-4, 6-2.

Then, June Yu won two matches. He first crushed Fiji's Tyrone Speed, 6-0, 6-1, then defeated Samoa's Darius Carruthers, 6-3, 6-4.

La Hunn Lam then took on teammate Henry Choi and won, 6-0, 6-1; Ryan Choi put up a good fight in three sets against Vanuatu's Gabriele Wong, 4-6, 6-0, 6-10; Anne Lee overpowered Fiji's Elizabeth Qaqaturagu, 6-1, 6-0; and Nason Wessel trounced Fiji's Deevansh Singh, 6-0, 6-4.

In the NMI's age 16 roster are Lam, Wessel, Siwoo, Henry, Yu, Wang, Irin Chung, and Hannah Chae. The age 14 group includes Ryan, Ian Chae, and Anne; the aged 12 group consists of Michael Jeon, Daniel Kang, Matt Zhu, Stella Choi, Emma Lang, and Selina Chi.

In the age 14 results, Ryan Choi defeated Vanauty's Gabriele Wong, 4-6, 6-0, while Ian and Hannah Chae and Irin Chung lost their debuts.

Ian Chae lost to Tahiti's Guilhem Pendu, 1-6, 0-6; Chung was downed by Guam's Leila Mercado, 6-7, 1-6; and Hannah Chae dropped 0-6, 1-6 loss against Tahitu's Mia Chang Yuk Shan.

In the age 12 results, assistant coach Colin Ramsey provided an update.

"Our 12s girls cruised to a win today. Stella took her singles 6-1 6-1 and Emma followed with a 6-2 6-2 win. The boys had a tougher route, losing both singles matches. Michael lost the first set 1-6 and fought back to win the second set 6-3. A close super tiebreak that went the way of George

See NETTERS on Page 19